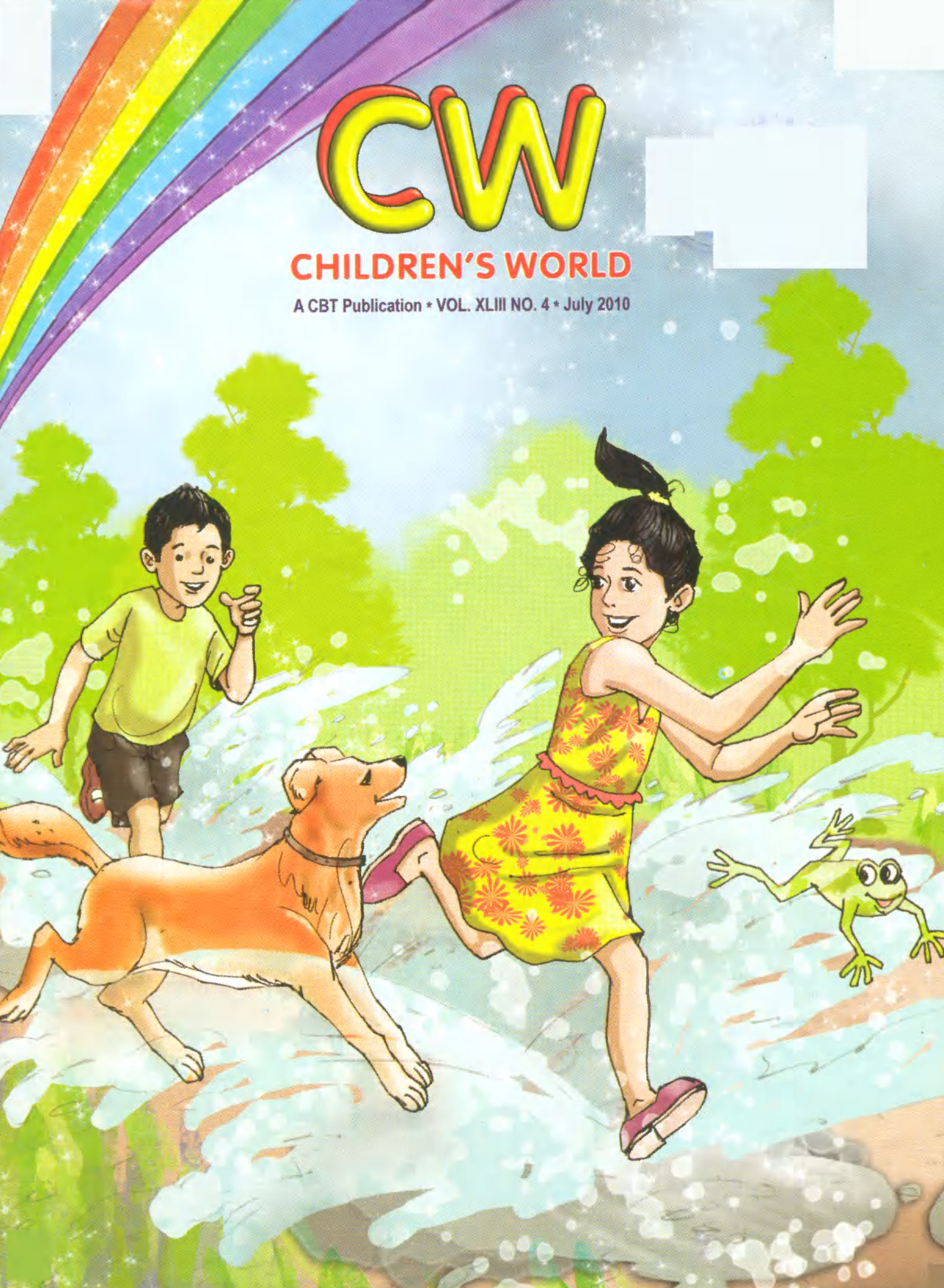
CW

CHILDREN'S WORLD

A CBT Publication * VOL. XLIII NO. 4 * July 2010



OUR INDIA

TRUE PATRIOTISM

Hitesh Das (10)
Layout: Subir Roy

My dear friends,
Do you remember the freedom struggle,
The bloodshed of the people
In the deadly freedom battle?

Friends, remember
The brave Lakshmibai,
Who fought to save the country
With utmost try.
Sacrificing life to save motherland,
Lakshmibai taught us
To unite and stand.
Do not forget Mahatma Gandhi,
Who was a man of
Vision and mission.

He not only fought for
India's autonomy,
But also for
Poverty and education.

O, my friends, I request you,
Do not neglect their commitment.
We are all indebted to them,
As they got India independent.

MY COUNTRY

Navita Malhotra (10)

My country is my pride
Her days are bright,
Her towns and countryside
Give a charming sight.

Her rivers and hills,
The vast ocean full of thrills,
With sweet, flowing water
Creates songs, not shrills.

Her air freshens the mind,
Her nature chastens the mind.
The ripening crop in the field
Really gladdens the mind.

My country is the greatest
Her glory is the highest.

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While skimming through my e-mails I came across these lines inscribed under the profile of one of our contributors:

If not Earth, where?
If not you, who?
If not now, when?

The thought was indeed meaningful and interesting and got me thinking... Are we all not guilty of pushing things away from us, shirking responsibility under the garb of silly excuses like: But I thought... It's not my... You mean.... Rightaway...?

I recall a famous study conducted on a group of elderly people who lived together in a home. They were given a plant each and half of them were told they would have to take care of it—pay attention to the plant's needs of food, water, sunshine, and the other half were told the plant was theirs simply to enjoy! A year later when the groups were compared it was found the elderly group who had taken charge of the plants were healthier in mind and body than the group who had depended on others to do their job!

As you turn the pages you will find published within a story about a little bird who, in spite of being jeered at for her tiny size, manages to achieve what others ten times her size or even bigger could not accomplish.

Two points stand out here. One, while the focus in both these narratives is not on age, size or even inclination what does surface is the core of the act—the effort that was put into nurturing the plant and the deep faith of the little bird in achieving the impossible.

If a simple act of caring (for a plant) can produce health and happiness, it speaks volumes on the virtues of taking on honest responsibility. If the faintest at heart could muster a strong will, it is anyone's guess what could be fathomed if persistence persists!

As we enjoy the first showers and splash away our discomfort of the hot summer in the puddles of swirling rainwater, the colourful rainbow peeping from the sky reminds me of the interesting observation made by the great poet Rabindranath Tagore whose 150th birthday we are celebrating this year:

"Clouds come floating into my life, no longer to carry rain or usher storm, but to add colour to my sunset sky."

Considering it's the rainy season, no message could be better than that.

Navin Menon

CHILDREN'S WORLD

A FRIEND FOREVER
FUN FOREVER

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NEWS UPDATE

Cover Design: Saurabh Pandey

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Ladakh
Mountains Of Adventure

Simren Kaur

BOOK TALK

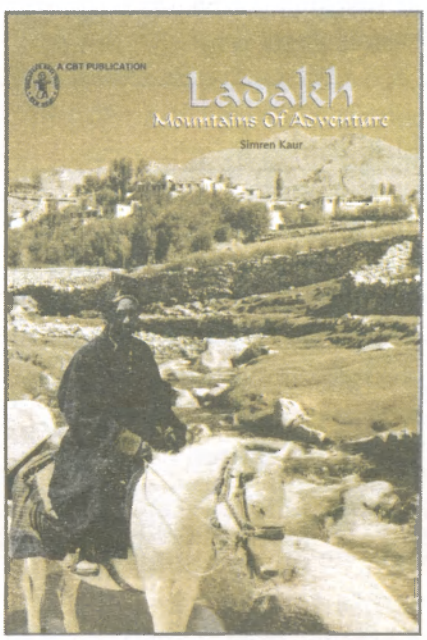
THE BOOK, a captivating travelogue, recounts the journey undertaken by the author along with her husband, an army officer, to the Ladakh region of Jammu & Kashmir.

Containing amazing details of the unusual way of living in the higher reaches of the mountains, the book is a factual account covering even restricted zones that makes the reading of the book a unique experience.

The writer and her husband, looking forward to a few weeks of open-air adventure, plan a trip to Ladakh, totally unaware of what was in store for them. But they soon discover that undertaking the daring trip was really worth the trouble, for what unravelled was way beyond their imagination!

The sights they saw revealed the picturesque beauty of the region, while the warm hospitality of the Ladakhi people touched their hearts immensely. Added to that was the unmatched spiritual experience of visiting the gompas and traversing the terrifying gorges that kept them on their toes... There really was so much to absorb!

The minute detailing has done ample justice to the account. As the narration progresses, it appears to be a virtual wonderland to the reader—the mountains of Ladakh that contain the jewels of panoramic glaciers, buzzing bazaars that cater to local needs, monasteries depicting mythological stories of the heroic Demon Gods, the orchards of apricots and walnuts, the frescos of the Alchi village, accounts of the panoramic view from Likhim monastery and the Changla pass, beauty of the water birds of Pangong lake, wild asses and hefty yaks, the lengthy Polo Kangkala Pass and the horrific dangers of the Karakoram Pass!



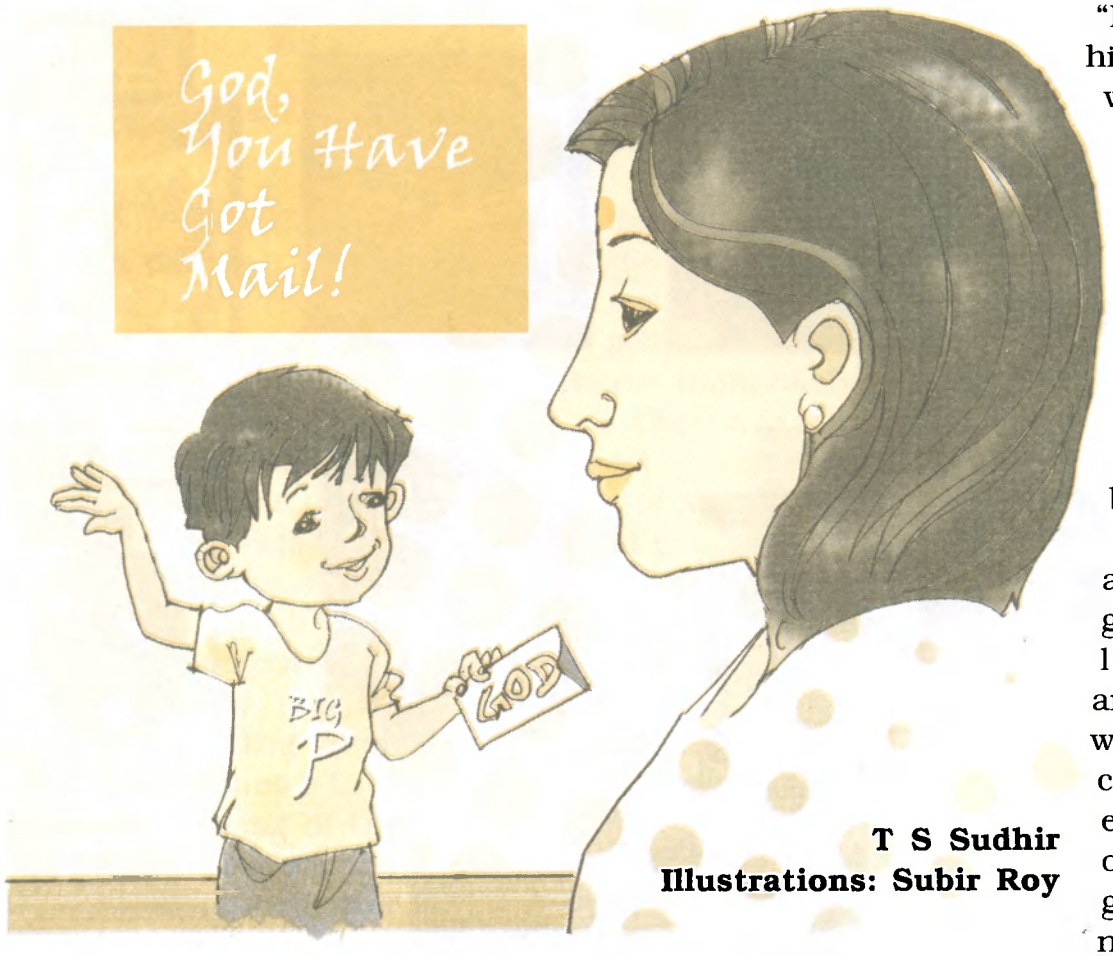
All in all, the simple language and systematic description lends universal appeal to the book and keeps the readers glued. Also, the writer's keen observation makes every chapter tell a different tale. A must read!❖

Sunita Sinha

A CBT Publication

At the Karakoram Pass, if a person stands still just long enough, death is certain in the freezing cold...yet the body will remain as fresh as in a deep freezer, for years and years... Riders, sitting on their horses, frozen solid for eternity, have been found here...Those lucky enough to survive the hardships of Karakoram Pass and get across the treacherous terrain...are reduced to mere skin and bones, their beards covered with icicles, their legs giving way beneath them, their fingers and toes eaten by frostbite and their speech incoherent....

God, You Have Got Mail!



T S Sudhir
Illustrations: Subir Roy

RADHA WOKE up with a start. Pranav, her six-year-old son, was not in the bed beside her. She reached for her cellphone beneath the pillow and looked at the time. It was 1 a.m. Gosh! where had this little boy gone?

Radha checked the bathroom but Pranav was not there. Then she saw light streaming out from the study. She tiptoed into the room and found Pranav busy writing on his desk.

"What are you doing, dear," asked Radha, taking care not to startle him with a sudden sound.

"I am busy, Mom. I am writing a letter," replied Pranav.

Radha was surprised. "Letter to whom, Pranav?" she asked.

Pranav neither stopped writing nor did he look at his mother. "I am writing a letter to God," he said.

Radha was amused but she took care not to even smile lest Pranav should feel offended. Instead, controlling herself, she asked what he was writing to God at that late hour.

"I am writing to him that I do not want to grow up. I want to be six years old all my life."

"But why don't you want to grow up?" asked Radha, quite bewildered.

"I do not see any benefit in growing up. I love playing and having fun, watching cartoons and enjoying a lot of free time. If I grow up, I will not be able to play so much. I will have to work in an office and there will be other tensions and problems as well—tension if our maid does not come on time, tension of paying many bills and so on."

Radha was at a loss for words. "How will you send the letter?" she asked.

"Through a letter box, Mom. Haven't you seen one on the next street?" asked Pranav.

"But we don't know God's address. How do we post the letter to Him," Radha tried to reason.

"Then I have a brilliant

idea, Mom. You told me God lives above in the clouds. So the next time you travel by an aeroplane, I will give you the letter. When you are in between the clouds, you give the letter by hand to God." Pranav chuckled at his presence of mind and Radha was amused.

"Right, that is a good idea. You finish the letter tomorrow morning and give it to me. I will take it along when I am travelling next," said Radha.

The next morning, as decided, Pranav gave his mother the letter with GOD written in bold red ink on the envelope.

Bhargav, Pranav's elder brother, saw it and asked him what it was all about.

When Pranav told him the contents of his letter Bhargav said, "This is the age of the Internet. Let us send God an e-mail. You could even send an sms to him. That will reach him faster, Pranav."

Radha was even more stumped. "Do you have God's number or e-mail id?" she asked.

Bhargav was not going to let go of a chance to have some fun at his little brother's expense. "We will cook up an e-mail id," he whispered to his mom.

So the brothers sat on the computer, typed out the letter and mailed it to: Godintheclouds@gmail.com and pressed 'Send'.

"*Anna*, let us sms to him as well," said Pranav.

Bhargav borrowed his mother's mobile and keyed in: 'God, you have got mail from Pranav," and sent it to '1000'.

"Wow, *Anna*, you know God's mobile number?" said Pranav, his eyes wide open, full of hero worship.

"Elementary, my dear Pranav. If 'Police' is 100, then God being 'Super Police' has to be 1000!"

"You are a genius, *Anna*!" complimented Pranav.

All this while Radha was listening in to the boys' conversation. The email and sms were okay as a practical joke, but Pranav, she knew, would soon get restless if he did not hear from God.

So after a couple of days she typed out a letter which read like this: Dear Pranav,

Thanks very much for your email and sms. This is the first time a small kid has sent me an e-mail.

You have requested you do not want to grow up beyond the age of six. But Pranav, I can foresee in my computer that you are a young lad of about 20 years of age, extremely handsome, successful and very rich. Don't you want to be like that? Do let your Mom know your reply who will convey it to me.

Lots of love

God

Pranav read the letter

four times. Then he turned to his mother and spoke:

"Ok, Mom," he said, "God does have a point. If he has such good plans for me, it would be foolish not to want to grow up, right?"

Radha nodded in reply. "Your decision will be conveyed to God, Pranav," she said and added, "now how about preparing for your English test tomorrow?"❖

The light of Hope

Pragya
Layout: Subir Roy

When a child learns to walk
He keeps on falling,
He doesn't give up
But starts crawling.
Then he stands up once more
Either with the support of a chair
Or that of the door.

Then he again moves on,
Till he can stand upon
His own two feet.
And walk independently
On the street.

If a little child doesn't give up
Why should we,
When the stumbling blocks
On our way we see?

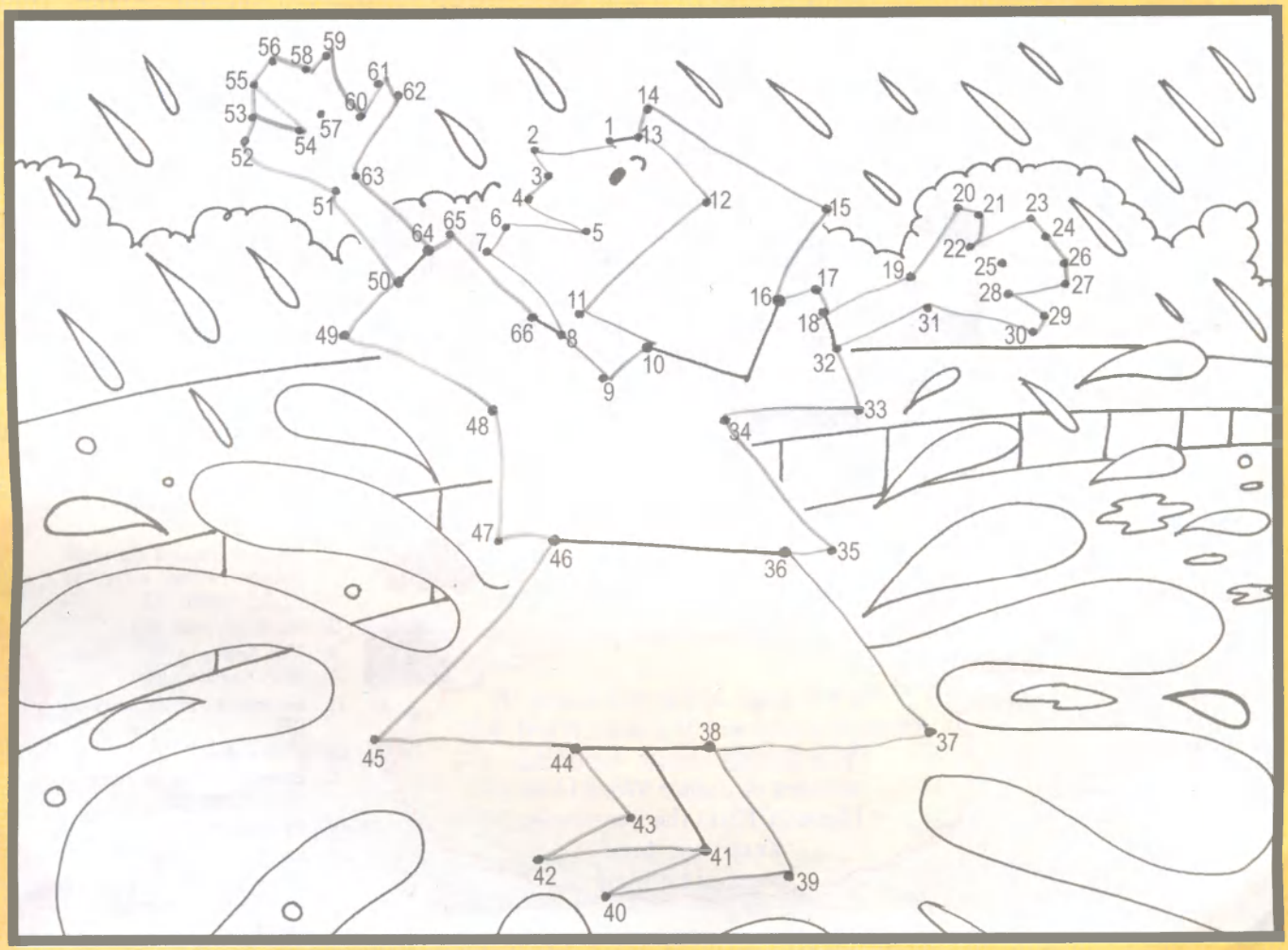
Hurdles are there everywhere,
It's your choice to cross them
Either by crying
Or for you to dare.
For, there is no need to be scared
When you are prepared.

Keep on moving upwards,
Keep climbing the rope,
Till you reach the candle
That spreads the light of hope!

DOT TO DOT

Calling all 5- to 8-year-olds!

Join the dots and colour the picture.
THREE most colourful pictures will win attractive prizes. Last date for receiving entries: July 25, 2010. (Xerox copies will not be considered.)



Dot to Dot (May 2010) Results
The prizewinners are:

1. **Shreya Gupta (7)**
   Raghubir Singh Junior Modern School
   Humayun Road, New Delhi
2. **Aishwarya Goyal (8)**
   Delhi Public School
   Sector-40-C, Chandigarh
3. **Trishaa Gandhi (8)**
   St. Paul's Church College
   Khandari Road, Agra

(PLEASE FILL IN CAPITAL LETTERS. MAKE SURE YOU WRITE THE COMPLETE ADDRESS OF BOTH YOUR RESIDENCE AND SCHOOL TO ENABLE US TO SEND YOUR PRIZES.)

NAME.....

AGE.....Boy/Girl.....

ADDRESS.....

.....Tel.....

SCHOOL.....

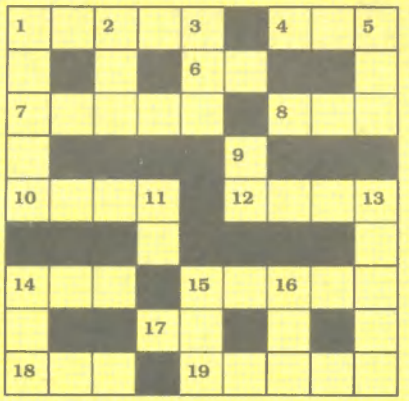
.....

HEAR YE! HEAR YE!
JUNIOR WORD HUNT

Specially introduced for 6-8-year-olds!

Geeta Menon

Fill in this crossword and send it to us on or before July 25, 2010. THREE all-correct entries will get attractive prizes. So what are you waiting for? Get cracking! (Xerox copies and faxed entries will not be considered.)



Across:

1. The Bhopal Shatabdi Express running between Bhopal City and New Delhi is the fastest _____ in India. (5)
4. I could see my father carrying a kite under his _____. (3)
6. The cat tried to drink my glass of milk lying _____ the table. (2)
7. When we were playing 'I spy', my brother hid _____ the dining table. (5)
8. A female chicken (3)
10. To hit something with your foot (4)
12. Indian _____ has three colour bands: safftron, white and green (4)
14. There _____ so many books in the library. I would like to read all of them. (3)
15. A _____ is rich in vitamin A and C, a fruit (5)
17. Let us all go to the Principal and tell him about the problem. (2)
18. A centipede has many _____s. (3)
19. My daughter cannot sleep without her _____ bear. (5)

Down:

1. A vehicle that is open at the back and is used to carry goods (5)
2. I like to keep my books _____ notebooks in order. (3)
3. When she heard the news, she was neither surprised _____ upset. (3)
5. Plural of 'man' (3)
9. The Gateway _____ India is in Mumbai. (2)
11. Kilometre, abbreviation (2)
13. I love the _____ of the chicken curry as much as the pieces. (5)
14. Everybody (3)
15. Past tense of 'get' (3)
16. When you _____ the first ten digits you get 55, opposite of 'subtract' (3)

Turn to page 20 for the names of three prizewinners of Junior Word Hunt (May 2010). Look out for prize-winners of Junior Word Hunt (June 2010) in the next issue. Keep your 'toes' crossed till then!

(PLEASE FILL IN CAPITAL LETTERS. MAKE SURE YOU WRITE THE COMPLETE ADDRESS OF BOTH YOUR RESIDENCE AND SCHOOL TO ENABLE US TO SEND YOUR PRIZES.)

NAME..... AGE..... BOY/GIRL..... CLASS.....

ADDRESS.....

.....TEL.....

SCHOOL.....

The Hedge King

Puneeta Khatri
Illustrations: Ankur Mitra

THE BIRDS were quite upset; no one took them seriously in the jungle. What was worse, if they had any complaints they had no leader who could go to Sher Khan and explain their problems.

"Like the animals we should appoint a king," said the old wise owl.

"But how will we choose our king?" chirruped the other birds.

So one bright, beautiful morning all the birds were summoned from the woods, fields and meadows. The eagle, the robin, the parrot, the pigeon, the crow, the bluebird, the owl, the lark, the sparrow, the cuckoo, the lapwing and many others, too numerous to mention, all came flying to the jungle. Along with them also came a tiny bird who had no name at all. There was a lot of confusion with so many birds chirping, hissing, chattering, cooing, cawing, clicking and clucking, trying to get their views across.

After much discussion it was decided that the bird that could fly the highest should be the king. All the birds lined up and when the signal was given they all flew up into the air.

There was a loud rustling and fluttering and beating of wings. The sky was a haze of dust and it seemed as if black clouds were floating over the field.

The larger birds flew higher and higher but the little birds soon grew tired and fell back quickly to earth. Within no time it was proved beyond doubt that the eagle was the only bird who could fly the highest, for it simply rose and it rose, until it seemed to be flying straight into the sun.

The birds below flapped their wings and they twittered in one voice, "Comeback, eagle! You will be our king! No one can fly as high as you can."

The eagle heard that and soon the big bird started descending. As it touched the ground, a tiny bird shot out from the eagle's back, where it lay hidden in the feathers, and folding its wings landed just next to the eagle. Everyone was surprised to see a frail, unknown bird that could fly as high as the eagle.

"I am king! I am king!" screamed the little bird.

"You? Our king?" all the birds cried out in anger. "You have cheated us! You have won by deception and slyness. You can't be our king."

On hearing these words,

all the tiny birds got united and sided with the small, unknown bird.

Seeing that the opinion was divided, the birds decided to have another competition.

"This time," announced the jury, "whosoever goes deepest into earth, shall be pronounced king."

The goose wallowed in the sand and the duck and ostrich strove to dig a hole! All the other birds too made all efforts to bury themselves in the ground but most of them failed. The tiny bird, however, found a rabbit's hole to hide in! The birds were surprised and as they crept inside, they saw the stubs of carrot and understood the little bird had cheated again.

"See, how deep the hole is. I am king! I am king!" screamed the little bird.

"You, our king?" mocked the birds again, now even more angry than before. "Do you think you can make a fool of us? You shall be punished!"

And all the birds got together and locked up the little bird in the same rabbit hole and asked the old owl to be on guard.

Two days and two nights passed. The owl was very tired sitting on the tree and watching the hole. He found it lonely and wearisome sitting alone staring at the rabbit's hole.

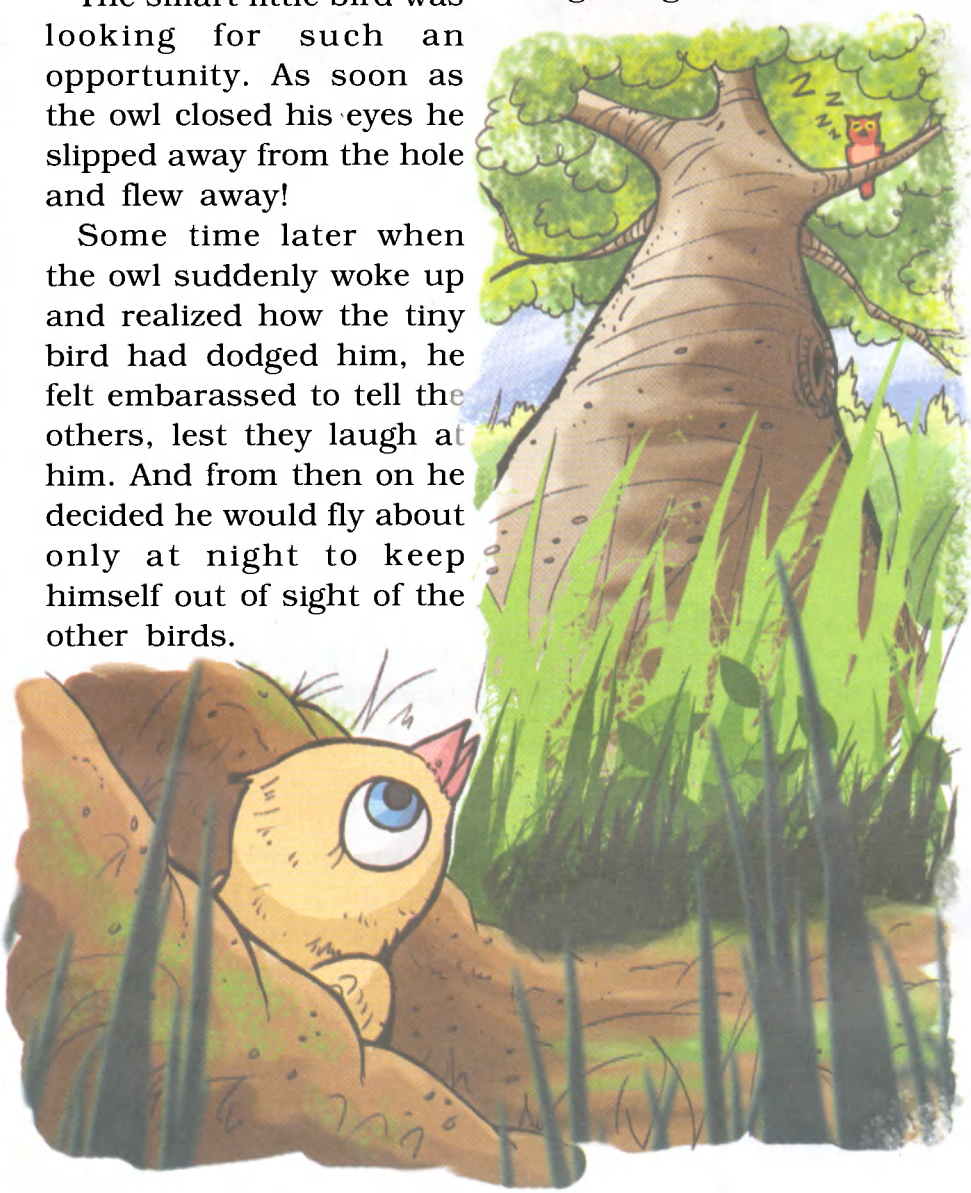
By the third day the owl was fed up as no bird came to relieve him. He thought up a plan. 'Let me shut one eye and watch with the other,' he said to himself. So he closed one eye and stared steadfastly with the other, but before he knew it, he had shut both eyes and was fast asleep.

The smart little bird was looking for such an opportunity. As soon as the owl closed his eyes he slipped away from the hole and flew away!

Some time later when the owl suddenly woke up and realized how the tiny bird had dodged him, he felt embarassed to tell the others, lest they laugh at him. And from then on he decided he would fly about only at night to keep himself out of sight of the other birds.

The little bird too keeps away, for he fears the other birds would punish him for cheating them. But do you think he can stop himself from bragging? No way! For the tiny bird hides in the hedges and when it is all alone, it sings out nice and loud, "I am king! I am king!"

And the other birds mock him in reply, "Yes, yes, the hedge-king! The hedge-king!"❖



The First Monsoon Shower...

Kartik Agrawal
Layout: Saurabh Pandey

FOR Indians, especially North Indians, the monsoon season is no less than an 'epic' retold every year with significant modifications. Nevertheless, it is a melodrama encompassing the multitudinous aspects of our life.

When we talk of rains we talk not only of agriculture but of our social life, the mounting electricity bills, the dry and thirsty taps, dying lakes, the galloping inflation, the bearish share market and recessionary pressures on India's economy.

That is what happened last year. The lifeline of India, the annual monsoons that were abnormally delayed, proved to be conspicuous by their absence. The culprit was said to be global warming, that is, consistent rise in the temperatures globally and the large scale inhuman deforestation all over the subcontinent particularly in the Himalayan belt. This had resulted in reduction of vegetation in the area and consequently had led to a weakening of the yearly monsoon.

This has also been proved by the fact that the world's wettest place in India—'Mawsynram' in the State of Meghalaya—which records a rainfall of over 1000 cm per year, due to its haphazard and unexploited overgrowth, has placed 'Cherrapunji' in first position as the town of maximum rainfall thanks to the prominence of its thick vegetation or 'green gold'.

All said and done, when rains are delayed there are ominous projections of an increase in the prices of essential commodities, a downswing in exports and other similar crisis. TV channels flash breaking news of farmers going into depression, of crops dying, also apprehensions and fears of a further increase in the prices of essentials in the wake of the long, dry spell.

And then suddenly one day the meteorology department announces the first sighting of the rain carriers. Thereafter the weathermen keep making their observations and people look forward to the rains. Day after day they sit and stare expectantly at the blue sky for any signs of rain...a single dark spot, even a speck of a dark cloud announcing the arrival of rains.

Waiting and watching is a tiresome task and soon one begins to believe the

MET department has once again misjudged the arrival of the rainy season.

Then one day, when we are least expecting it, we smell the rain! Yes, there is a hint of moisture in the air. A cool breeze blows mingled with the scent of damp soil...a welcome harbinger of the monsoon season...and it spreads... ...through the city... ..through the minds of people...infusing new life and hope into the suffering humanity.

Back home, instinctively, grandmothers get busy preparing snacks and savouries to serve with piping hot tulsi tea and spicy chutney!

Then rains come...first as a light drizzle, gaining momentum gradually. There is thunder and lightning...the sun has been pushed out and the cool wind is happy and gay. Lured by this divine scene, we come out of our homes to welcome Lord Indra's gift to humanity. The trees bow their head in honour, the cheerful wind is like a young girl, hopping, skipping, tripping and then running where her happy heart takes her, hitting and bouncing off the walls. Yes, what we witness is a magnificent panorama of nature coming alive—the trumpets of Indra's court blowing without a pause and the dazzling blue light bridging the two horizons. We unknowingly but most willingly salute the dark clouds and humbly acknowlege this lively communication of nature.

As the great poet Percy B. Shelley recounts in his poem: 'The Clouds'

I wield the flail of the lashing hail
And whiten the green plains under,
And then again I dissolve it in rain
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

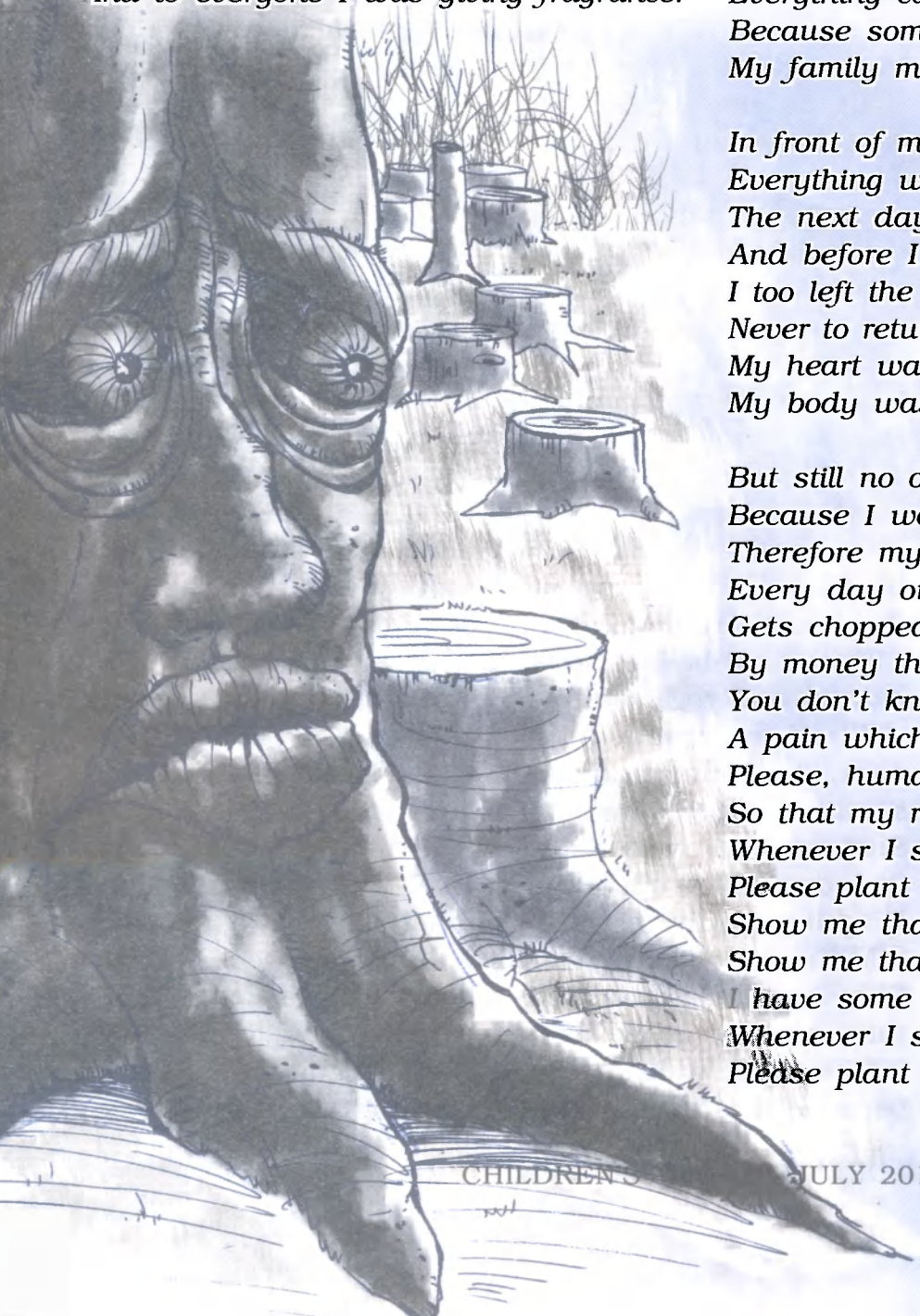
And so, the clouds wielded the flail and yielded the rain. Soon the soil-smothered face of earth is bombarded with pellets of cool rain, the leaves blushing in their new robes, the laugh of the trees more than audible and a soothing sense, one that cannot be described, spreads everywhere.

Various poets have described rains in infinite ways, their zest though remains the same—that rains are a vital force whose absence could practically deprive us of the wonderful colours entwined in the majestic rainbow.❖

Autobiography of Someone

Ayush Shah (14)
Illustration: Ankur Mitra

One day in the morning
I was standing and enjoying
The lovely winter weather,
The air was moving my cozy feather,
The sun was giving me happiness,
And to everyone I was giving fragrance.



The cuckoo and the koel bird
Were my best friends in this world.
My father and my brother
Were near me, so was my mother,
I was there in the lap of nature
And near me was flowing
A brimming river.

I was commanded not to shiver
But there was a little to fear,
It was the last day of my joy,
Suddenly my friends went away,
Everything came to a standstill
Because someone was going to kill
My family members on that hill.

In front of my eyes they all died.
Everything was lost, my life, my pride.
The next day was of sorrow and grief
And before I could borrow some relief
I too left the world.
Never to return.
My heart was burnt,
My body was burnt.

But still no one cried when I died,
Because I was merely a tree,
Therefore my feelings no one could see.
Every day one of my family members
Gets chopped away,
By money their value, man cannot pay.
You don't know what we have to bear,
A pain which is so severe,
Please, human beings, be my peer
So that my relatives need not fear.
Whenever I see from above,
Please plant trees and show your love.
Show me that you have some affection,
Show me that with you
I have some relation.
Whenever I see from above,
Please plant trees and show your love.

A Morning Walk

Prateek Arora (9)
Illustration: Subir Roy

IT WAS the day our teacher told us about the health benefits of a morning walk. I came home and shared the same with my mother.

She agreed the teacher was right.

I said to her, "But I don't believe it."

My mother said, "Then why don't you try it out? Tomorrow is a holiday for you. Go to park early in the morning and see for yourself."

My sister who was listening shouted with joy, "I am going for a morning walk tomorrow!"

The next morning my mother woke us up at 6 o'clock. We quickly brushed our teeth and left the house around 7 a.m. with our bat-ball, rackets, shuttle and yoga mats.

When we reached the park, we could hear the sound of people laughing. Surprised, we went close and found a few old people laughing loudly.

My sister asked them, "Why are you laughing like this, uncle?"

"We are laughing because it is a very good exercise for our body," said an old man.

After that my sister suggested we should play some games. "Let us see who wins more games," she said.

First we played cricket and I won that game. Then we played badminton in which I lost. Then we did yoga and laughed like those old people.

At last when we were going home my sister said, "Let us have a tie-breaker."

"How?" I asked.

"Let's have a race."

When we started the race, my sister was leading. So to win I acted as if I have got hurt. When she came to help me, I suddenly took the lead and won the race!

The score was now 1-2 and I had won the challenge. We came back home and related to our mother all that we had seen and done in the park.

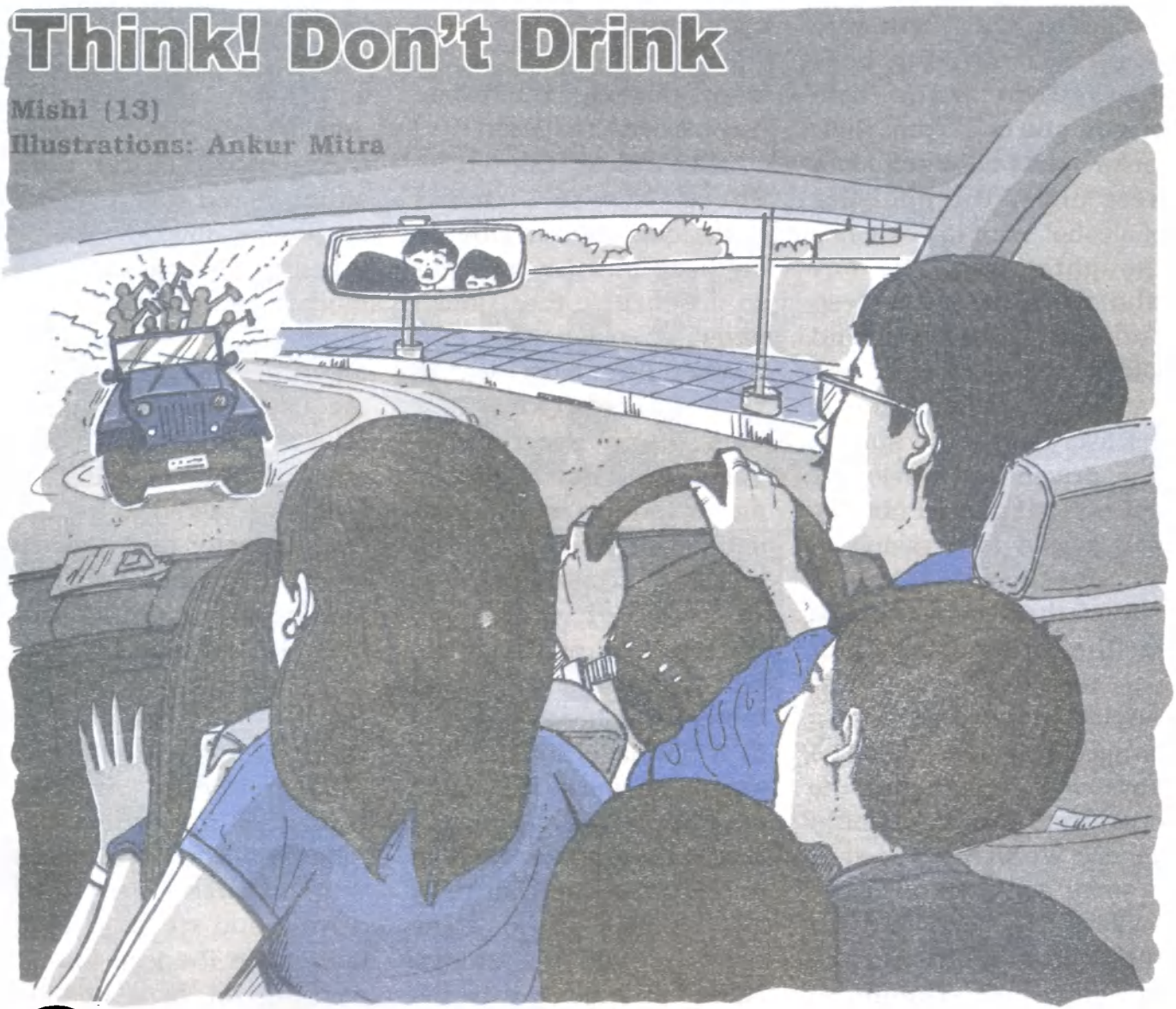
"It was great fun, Mother," I said. "I really enjoyed going to the park in the morning. I feel fresh and happy."

My mother was happy too. "Now do you believe that going for a morning walk is very good for our body?" she asked.

"Yes," I said to her, "now I will regularly go for a morning walk."❖

Think! Don't Drink

Mishi (13)
Illustrations: Ankur Mitra



OUR FINAL exams had ended and all of us were absolutely free. We decided to go and see the latest movie 'Pink Panther 2'.

We asked our parents and they all agreed happily. It was decided that my father would accompany us. There were six of us who wanted to see the movie—Yukti, Ramneek, Ramya, Navneet, Kamakshi and I.

The next afternoon, at about 1:15 p.m. we left our home to go for the movie. The road was closed so we had to make a detour. Hence we changed our plans and decided to go and see another movie 'Thunder Zone'. Each of my friends called up their parents and informed them of the change in our programme.

At first there were one or two vehicles in sight but later the road became completely deserted. After some time we heard very loud music. It was coming from a vehicle heading our way on the same road. A loud siren accompanied the vehicle.

Sensing danger, my father quickly parked the car at a safe place. Soon our doubt came true.

An open jeep jam-packed with youngsters was heading towards us at

top speed. The riders were about seven young boys dressed in jeans and bright shirts. From their looks one could tell they were under the influence of alcohol. As if to prove our thoughts right, the boy who was driving the jeep suddenly stood up and joined his friends who were dancing to the loud music. A shiver ran up our spines. The driver had obviously not noticed us and now we had a wild jeep racing in our direction.

My father quickly turned on the ignition key but the jeep was faster! It hurled towards us and banged into our car. The boys were flung out of the open jeep! But what could we do? We were trapped in a small car with all doors locked. The jeep had hit the bonnet of our car and now it stood straight in front of our car. The engine was smashed. My father hit his head on the steering wheel and was bleeding profusely. I was sitting on the front seat when the windscreen had smashed right into my face. I had no idea where all I was bleeding from. It was very painful. I could hear Kamakshi crying with fright from the back seat and could hear Navneet, Ramneek and Ramya comforting her.

Suddenly my heart skipped a beat. What had happened to Yukti? I couldn't hear her voice. There were many questions hammering in my head but the pain was so unbearable that I don't know when I passed out.

When I woke up I was in hospital. I didn't know how long I had been there. There was nobody around me. I sat up with great difficulty. My body was still hurting everywhere. As I sat up, I saw my companions on the beds next to mine. I also saw my father. His head was tied in a bandage and he was having his meal. He looked at me and gave me a triumphant smile. He was happy that I was all right and talked to me for some time. Then all of a sudden I saw him quickly turn his gaze away when he saw something behind me. I turned around to see the reason for his sudden reaction. Behind me was a mirror. I was about to cry when I saw my reflection in it. Almost my whole body above the waist was covered with bandages; on the table next to me was a big packet in which there were many shattered pieces of glass. I turned towards my father and saw Yukti lying on the bed next to his. Her right limb had a plaster though she appeared to have already woken up from her deep slumber and was perfectly conscious now.

During visiting hours my mother and grand-parents came to meet all of us and my father. When they saw me they started crying. After some time my friends and Yukti's family came in. Everyone talked to us and then a doctor and a nurse came in. The adult visitors said goodbye though my friends stayed on. The nurse switched on the television for us and we watched 'Pink Panther 2'.

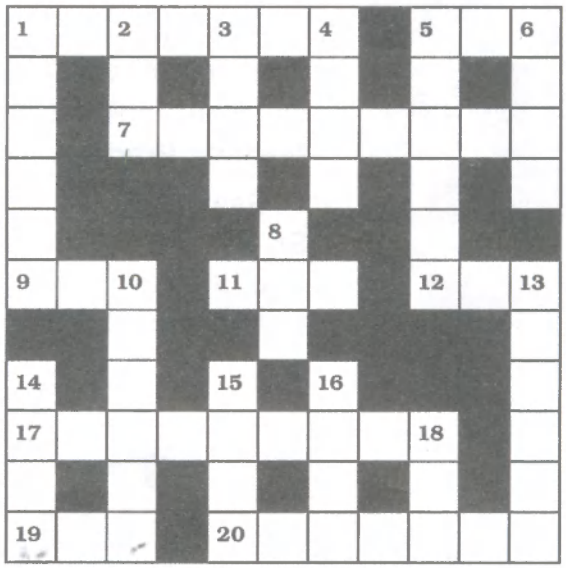
Later my friends informed me what had followed. The jeep riders were arrested for drunken driving and stealing. They had stolen the jeep from a parking lot of a nearby shopping mall.

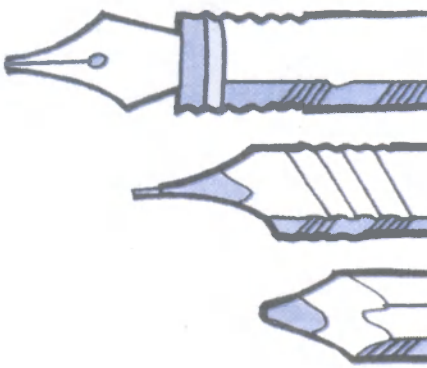
Well, now I am perfectly fine and enjoying my holidays. I just wish that such an incident never happens again. ❖

Word Hunt

Geeta Menon

Fill in this crossword and send it to us on or before July 25, 2010. THREE all-correct entries will get attractive prizes. So what are you waiting for? Get cracking! (Xerox and faxed entries will not be considered.)
Turn to page 20 for the names of Three prizewinners of Word Hunt (May 2010). Look out for prizewinners of Word Hunt (June 2010) in the next issue. Keep your fingers crossed till then!





Across

1. Clumsy (7)
5. _____over is a bridge that carries one road over another (3)
7. If today is Monday then _____ was Sunday (9)
9. National Cadet Corps is open to school and college students on voluntary basis, abbreviation (3)
11. There is a _____ on smoking in public places. (3)
12. Every housing colony must have a Residents Welfare Association to look into the problems of the residents living within, abbreviation (3)
17. The principles or reasons which explain a particular course of action. (9)
19. Salary (3)
20. As proud as a _____ (7)

Down

1. The third season of the year when leaves fall (6)
2. My mother played a _____ role in bringing together the whole family. (3)
3. In addition, too (4)
4. Still waters run _____. (4)
5. Food for farm animals (6)
6. My daughter kept bouncing up and down like a _____. (4)
8. Admirer (3)
10. Talking a lot in a friendly way (6)
13. The school has come under _____ for keeping the pass percentage low. (6)
14. The poachers were happy to see the tusker falling in their well-set _____. (4)
15. _____ hole, a mistake in the way a law has been written which enables people to misuse (8)
16. Hot liquid rock that comes out of a volcano (4)
18. An individual's sense of his or her own value and importance (3)

(PLEASE FILL IN CAPITAL LETTERS. MAKE SURE YOU WRITE THE COMPLETE ADDRESS OF BOTH YOUR RESIDENCE AND SCHOOL TO ENABLE US TO SEND YOUR PRIZES.)

NAME.....AGE.....BOY/GIRL.....CLASS.....

ADDRESS.....

.....TEL.....

SCHOOL.....

Word Hunt (May 2010) Results

A	F	I	C	I	O	N	A	D	O	
F		F		C				R		H
R				O				D		A
A	D	V	E	N	T	U	R	O	U	S
I			G		R		U		S	
D	D		G	R	A	C	E		P	A
	D				D					P
P	A	R	T	N	E	R	S	H	I	P
E		O				E				L
N		A				A		G		E
	P	R	E	C	A	R	I	O	U	S

The prizewinners are:

1. **Sharanya Mohan**
   Sardar Patel Vidyalaya
   Lodhi Estate, New Delhi
2. **Prerna Jain**
   St. Raphael's H.S. School
   Old Sehore Road
   Madhya Pradesh
3. **S. Gaayathri**
   Sri Satya Sai Higher Sec. School
   Puttaparthi, A.P.

JUNIOR WORD HUNT

Here are the prizewinners!

ANSWERS

May 2010

1st
Ishika Jain
Delhi Public School
Vasant Kunj
New Delhi

2nd
Jahnvi Bhambhani
Lancer's Convent School
Prashant Vihar
Delhi

3rd
Karthika Warrier
Delhi Public School
Indirapuram
Ghaziabad

B	U	N	K		C	A	G	E
U		O		D		M		X
Z			H	E	N		S	I
Z		F		N		A		T
	K	I	T	T	E	N	S	
H		N		I		D		P
A	N		A	S	K			O
L		I		T		T		S
F	I	V	E		F	A	S	T

The King And The Blind Men

INDIAN FOLK TALE

FOLK TALES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Kiran Shankar Maitra
Illustrations: Subir Roy

EARLY ONE morning King Birbhadra went out hunting. While he was returning to his palace he felt very tired, hungry and thirsty. Suddenly, by the roadside he saw a field of watermelons. What else could be more desirable to a thirsty person? He ordered his attendants to bring some good watermelons. While they were proceeding towards the field, the king heard the sound of laughter. Everyone looked in the same direction and saw a middle-aged blind man.

The king asked, "Why do you laugh?"

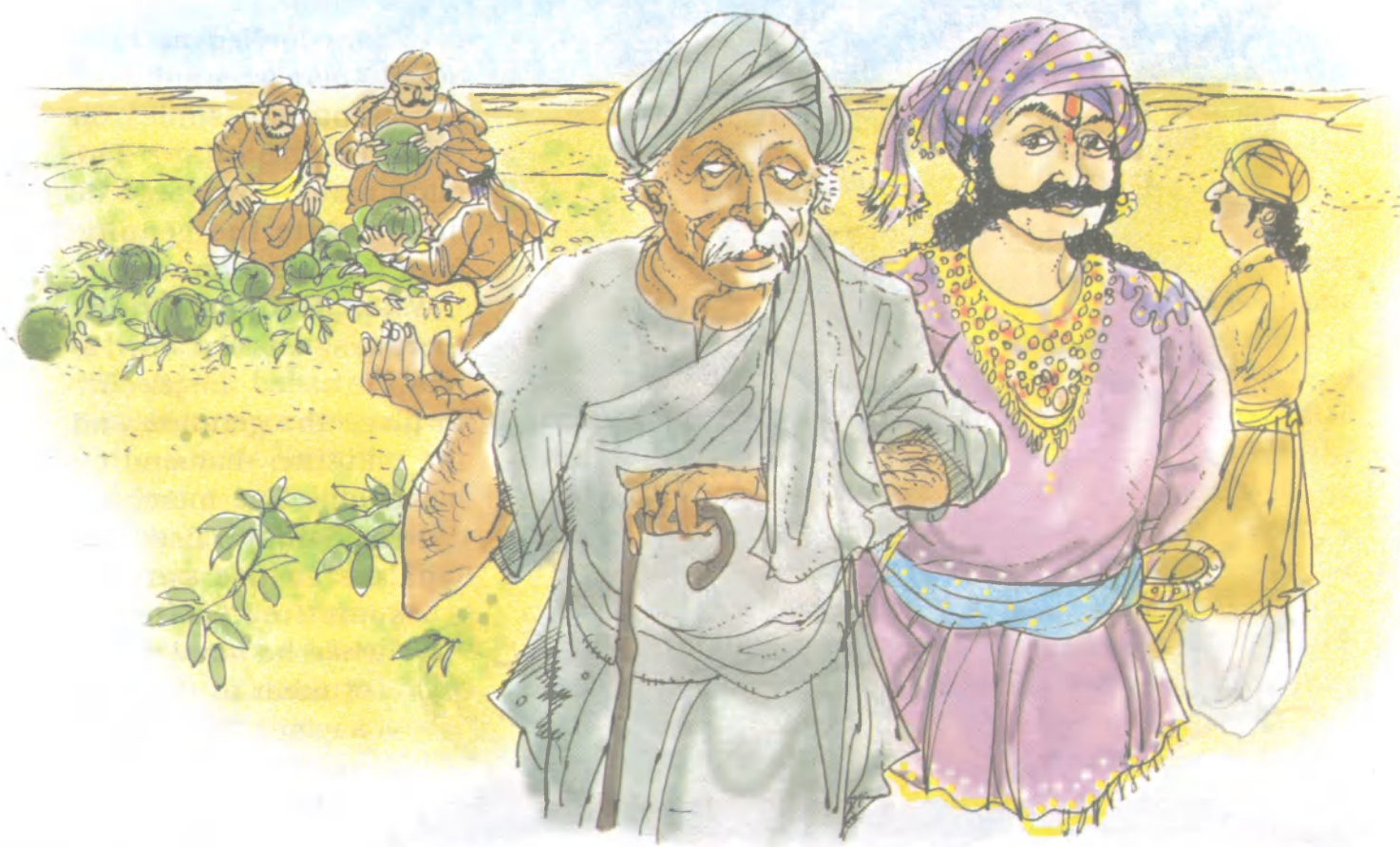
"You ordered for good watermelons," the blind man answered, "but there are no watermelons here, so it made me laugh."

"You are blind. How did you know there are no watermelons in the field?"

"My Lord, one does not require eyesight to know everything. The season of watermelons is over. All good fruits have been collected, maybe some rotten ones are left behind in the field."

The attendants reported exactly what the blind man had said.

King Birbhadra was

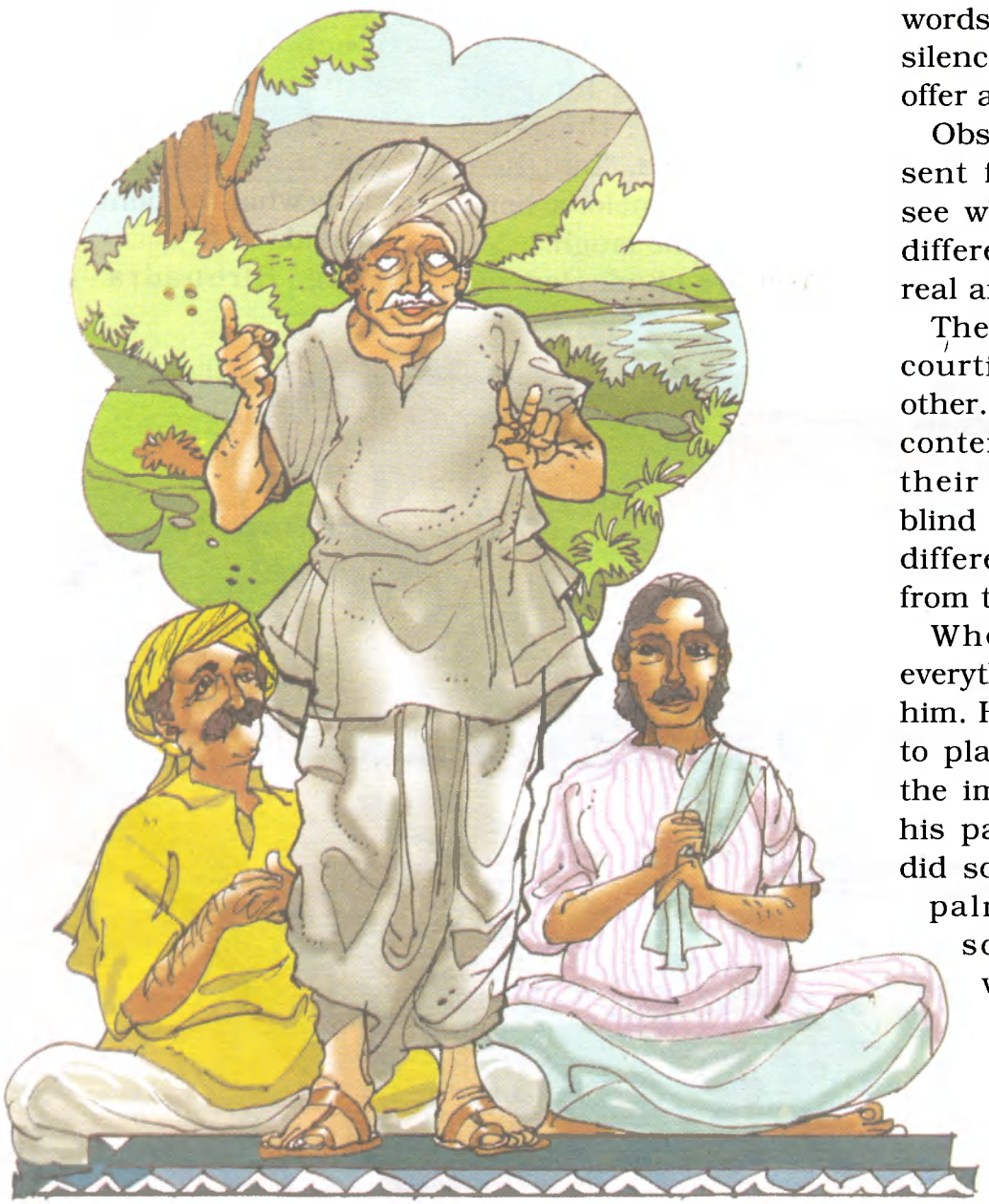


impressed by the blind man's farsightedness. He decided to take him along with him to the capital. The blind man might help him in solving problems.

The blind man's name was Sanjay. He was given a small hut on the outskirts to live in and was also given two potfuls of rice daily. Thus, Sanjay began spending his life.

Once a jeweller came to the palace with many precious gems and pearls. The courtiers, according to their prudence, advised the king to purchase the best ones. The jeweller noticed that none of them were capable of differentiating between the real diamonds and the imitations.

He then held one real diamond and one imitation in each hand and said, "The price of the actual diamond is one lakh rupees; the other is just a glass piece. Whoever is the most intelligent amongst you, may choose the real one. But there is one condition: if anyone chooses the imitation, he would have to pay money equivalent to the price of the real one."



Hearing the jeweller's words there was complete silence. None ventured to offer advice any more.

Observing this the king sent for Sanjay. "Let me see whether he is able to differentiate between the real and the imitation."

The ministers and the courtiers looked at each other. There were subdued contemptuous smiles on their lips. Sanjay? The blind man? How could he differentiate the genuine from the imitation?

When Sanjay arrived everything was explained to him. He asked the jeweller to place the genuine and the imitation diamond on his palms. The merchant did so. Sanjay raised his palms to the sun for sometime. After a while he handed one of them to the king saying, "This is the real diamond."

The merchant was amazed to see

that the blind man had indeed marked the correct one.

The king paid him the price and then asked Sanjay, "How did you find out the real one?"

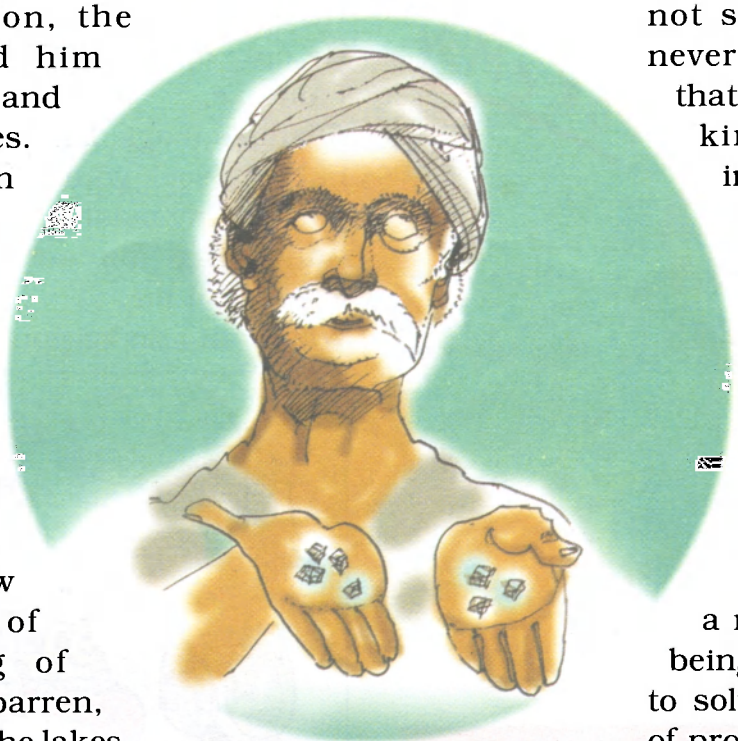
"My Lord, if you keep diamond and glass in the sun, the glass gets warm but the diamond does not," Sanjay replied.

Satisfied with the blind man's explanation, the king sanctioned him meals thrice daily and some other facilities.

One morning, in the court, there was a case of property dispute between two brothers. Their father had died and he had left behind a vast property. There were a few thousand acres of land consisting of fertile as well as barren, hilly terrain. Also the lakes, forests and rivers made it difficult to divide the property equally. Hence they had come to the king's court for settlement. When everything was explained to the concerned land and property minister and his officers, and they found it difficult to divide the property, the king again sent for Sanjay.

The ministers could not understand as to how a blind man could solve the difficult real estate dispute when experienced people with sight were in deep waters!

Hearing everything Sanjay said smilingly, "Let one of the brothers divide the entire property and the other one choose which parts he would like to accept. And, who would divide and who would choose his part, let it be decided by a draw of lots."



Both the brothers accepted the decision gladly. Their arduous problem was solved easily.

Thus, Sanjay spent his days living in the hut and helping the king solve complicated issues by offering timely advice.

One afternoon the king, feeling lonely, sent for Sanjay. When Sanjay arrived there he asked him, "Sanjay, you are such a wise, intelligent and learned person. The most difficult and intricate problems become easy to your sharp intelligence. You have been meeting me in various situations. Is it not surprising that you never could comprehend that I have not gained my kingdom through inheritance but have occupied the throne illegally?"

"I knew this from the very beginning," replied Sanjay in a calm voice.

"How?" asked the curious king.

"If one was born in a royal family and was being helped by someone to solve the most difficult of problems, he would not be so un-generous as to keep his adviser on the outskirts of the city in an ordinary hut simply providing him three meals a day," replied Sanjay.

The king had no words to reply and simply hung his head in shame.❖

Taken from *Indian Folk Tales*, A CBT Publication

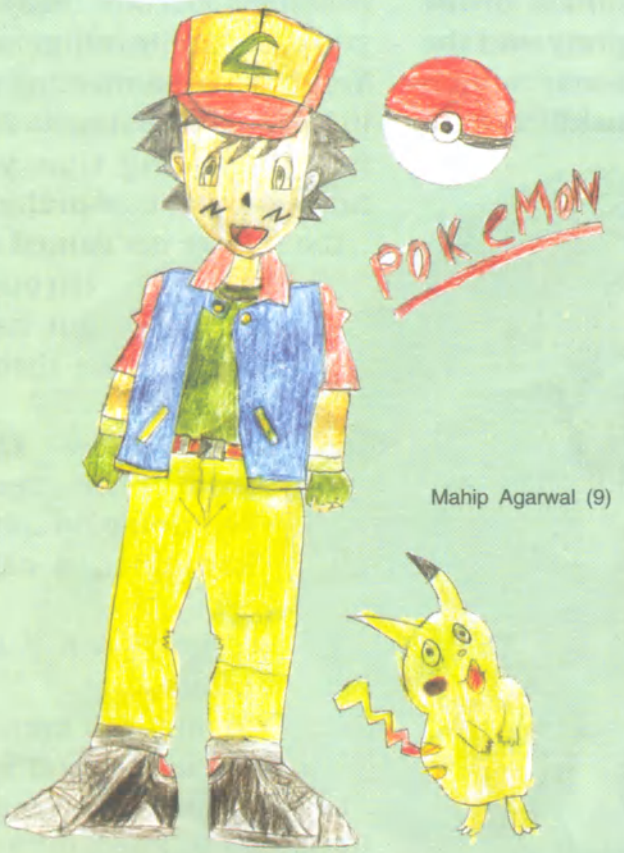
Our Page

Write. Draw. Have Your Way! This space is for first-time contributors. We promise not to edit a word.

Computer

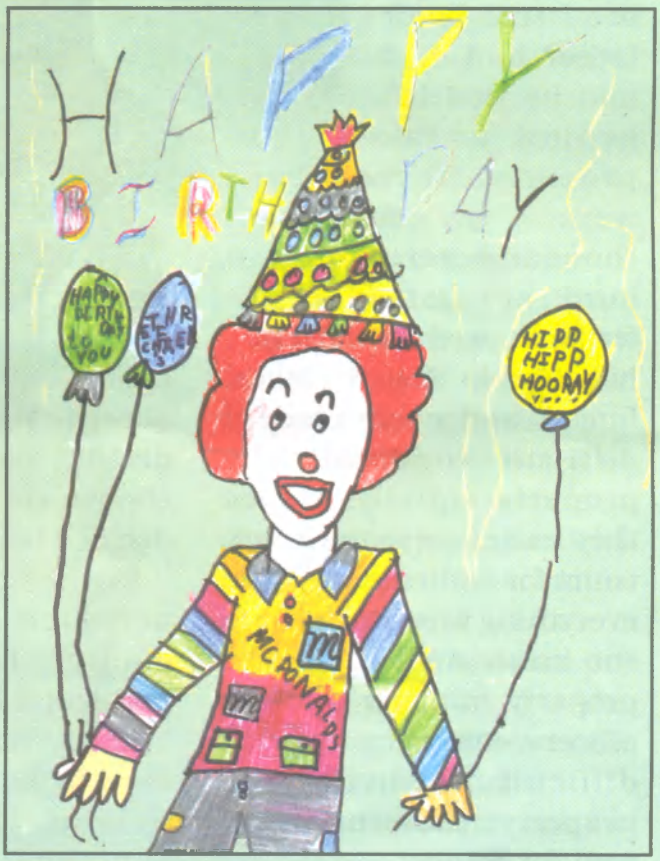
Adity. A. Pore

Klick...Klick...
Says the computer.
I am a gift of Science.
Man has only
Made me,
He loaded knowledge in me,
He only operated me,
I am like,
Alladin's magic lamp.
I always seek your command,
You are my master,
And I am at your service.
Command me,
What can I do for you?



Mahip Agarwal (9)

Meenu Gakhar (8)



Upasana Monga (7)

WHO IS MORE IMPORTANT?

Anita Chanda
Illustrations: Saurabh Pandey

IN A small aerodrome there was an aeroplane called Angel. Angel was very proud of himself. He thought he was the best mode of transport. He looked down upon all other means of transport —the cars, the buses, the tractors, the scooters, everything that plied on the road.

A beautiful red car called Fire came daily to the airport to ferry passengers from the aerodrome.

One day, both Angel the aeroplane and Fire the car had time-off from work. They chatted with each other while the pilot of Angel and the driver of Fire were relaxing. Angel proudly said, "Oh, Fire, you are so small. You can carry only four to five passengers at a time. Look at me! I am so majestic. I can take upto eighty passengers in one trip."

Fire said, "So what? You may be big, but you can't move in the city! I can take people to schools, offices, and other places. I can even take them shopping and for picnic too."

"Oh, but you are so slow. Do you think you can ever match my speed? Never! I'm certainly more useful than you."

Fire was now getting angry. In his heart he did always admire the aeroplane, but now he could not tolerate the boasting. Infuriated he said, "In that case, will you race with me?"

"Race with you? Are you joking?" said Angel with a loud laugh.

"No! I am not joking. Let's race each other," Fire said sternly.

When the car and the plane started their engines to begin the race, the driver and the pilot were alarmed. "Stop! Stop!" they shouted, "what are you doing? Have you both gone mad?"

Then the driver came up to Fire and scolded him, "What's the matter with you, Fire? You think you can compete with a plane? The plane will simply fly away while you will crash into the nearest boundary wall! You are but just a small car! What do you think of yourself?"

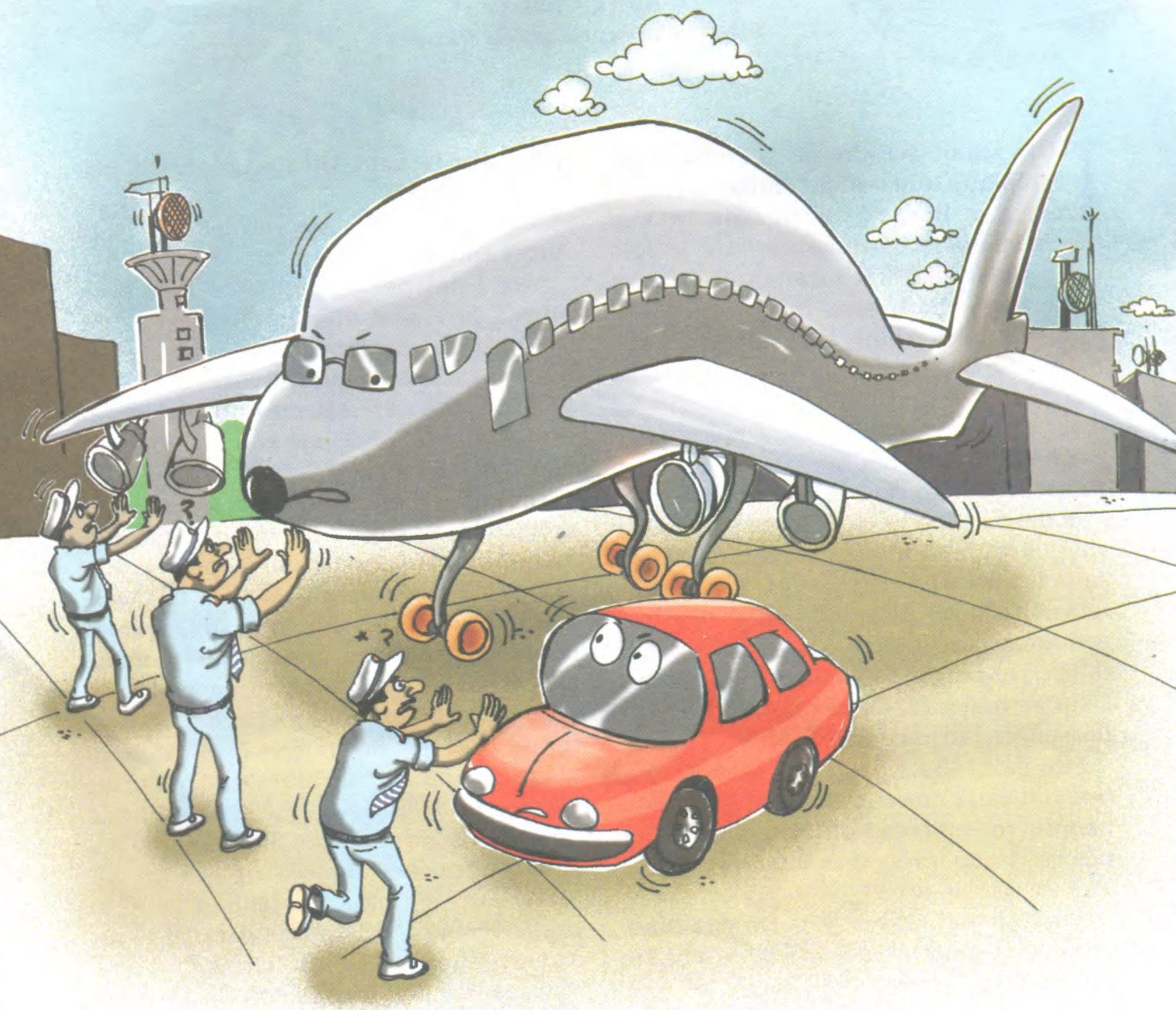
The driver's shouting made Fire very upset. 'Even my driver feels I am too small and insignificant,' he mumbled, 'oh dear, I think I am really, really unimportant,' he sobbed away. Then he went to his shed and locked himself up.

The next morning fire refused to go to work. He was still very upset with his driver. Knowing what had happened, Fire's other car friends too decided not to go to work. They were also feeling bad.

That morning Angel had brought some passengers from Bhopal and was waiting

for more passengers to arrive. 'But what was this?' wondered Angel, 'there are no passengers at the aerodrome! And more surprising...why are the people I brought from Bhopal not going home?'

Angel waited and waited. It was noon now and not a single passenger had arrived. Angel was getting bored. He



thought hard. What could be the matter? Then he noticed something. 'By the way,' he said to himself, 'where is Fire? I haven't seen him since morning!'

Now Angel too was quite upset. Without work he was feeling useless! Then suddenly he realized, 'Oh...oh...I think I know what must have happened to Fire. I hurt his feelings yesterday. He must be still upset with me... I have now realized how useless I am without my friend, Fire,' Angel said to himself, feeling sorry.

After that Angel immediately rang up Fire and said, "Hello, Fire, are you still upset with me? Please forgive me, I am really very sorry for what I said to you yesterday."

Now Fire was surprised to hear the kind words coming from Angel. "Oh, you're a big aeroplane, you need not feel sorry for anything! I am but a small car," said Fire sadly.

"No, no, believe me, it's not like that. Come here and you will see how important you are. I am really useless without you," said Angel almost crying.

Fire was feeling better now. "What is the matter?" he asked Angel.

"There are no passengers at the aerodrome for me to fly. And those I brought here from Bhopal are still stranded. They have no other way of reaching home. Fire, please accept my apologies and come here soon. You will come, won't you?" pleaded Angel.

"I am coming," Fire said happily.

Fire was happy to find passengers eagerly waiting for him to take them home from the aerodrome.

Angel greeted Fire with a warm smile. From then on they became not only good friends, but they became humble too. They had realized that everyone was equally important and useful for each other. ❖

Existence

Pragya
Illustration: Saurabh Pandey

She sat smothered
Beside the little fire
Ignoring the burns on her hand
She kept on burning the wire.
Soon she would complete the fence.

She picked the hot pieces of metal,
And kept them in the storehouse.
She would fix the nails tomorrow
Then she stood up
And started to browse.

The sun shone with the first ray,
It was her birthday.
She wanted to celebrate
Her turning sixteen,
But fate wouldn't allow it,
It was just too mean.

Today would be no better
Than yesterday,
At her usual night job.
No one knew it was her birthday,
No one cared...
Cared or believed she even existed.

She went home, her father was drunk.
After the tiring night job
Seeing the state of her father,
She would have been all sunk.

But there were a million more,
As many worries, as many chores.
While on your birthday you thrive,
She had to work to barely survive.

She brushed the dust off her skirt,
Every bone of her did hurt.
That's how she earned her existence
That's how she survived each day.
I say existence is precious,
Don't take it for granted.
She says existence was
Her Birthday gift,
And this gift of hers
Shall never be supplanted.

Rashid's Roses

Avanti Devasthale Saikia
Illustrations:
Saurabh Pandey

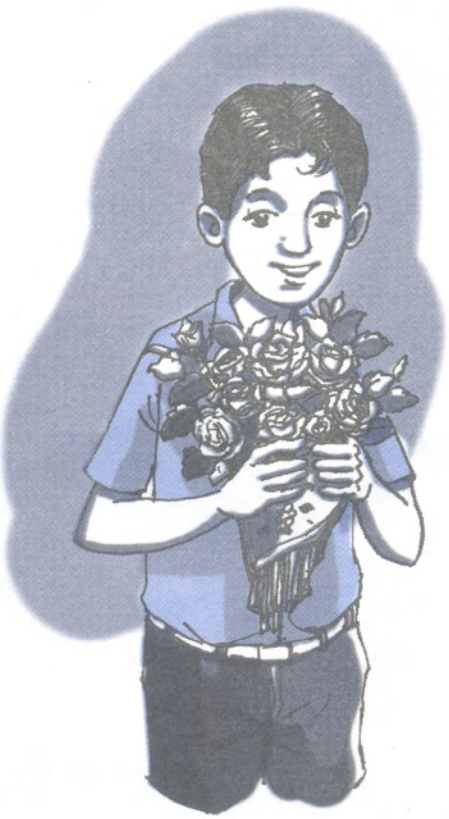
Rashid was getting impatient. The Chief Guest was an Environment Specialist talking on the importance of preserving greenery. He was being welcomed on the dais with a bouquet of a dozen roses. He kept the bouquet on the table and began his talk.

Rashid was restless as the next day was Ramzan Id and the day after that the Navaratri festival began. So it was their last day before the school closed for the autumn break.

The festival of Id was special as his mother prepared the best vermicelli porridge in the world with finely cut cashews, almonds, raisins and puffy, hot puris fried in ghee to go with it.

Aah! The thought of it made his mouth water! After a whole year of repeatedly boring food, this was one day he eagerly waited for.

Every year, on the eve of Id, he would accompany his mother to shop for the feast. They would buy new clothes and shop for the ingredients of the feast that he knew by heart—one kg wheat flour, half a kilo ghee, a handful each of cashews, raisins and almonds, one litre milk and a packet of vermicelli.



"Wake up, Rashid."

Rashid felt someone shaking him. He did not realize when he dozed off.

"You nearly slept through the talk!" Shahid, his best friend said grinning. "Don't you have to go for shopping with your Ammi?"

Rashid got up from his chair and started moving towards the gate when suddenly his eyes fell upon the bouquet of roses that the guest had forgotten on the table.

"You wait here, I will be right back," he called out to Shahid as he ran towards the table and took the bouquet. 'Ammi would love this!' he beamed happily to himself and scurried back.

It was almost dark when he reached home. He called out to his mother from the gate itself, "Ammi! Ammi? Hurry up, let's go to the market!"

But on reaching inside he found his mother sitting on the floor, crushing the cashews.

"The shopping is already done, son!" she said. "Shahid's mother told me in the factory that it would be late by the time you boys would be home, so we both did the marketing! I have got you that red T- shirt," said his mother, pointing to a plastic packet lying on his study table.

Rashid's mother worked at a handloom factory which provided employment to the women of the village.

Shahid was disappointed when he heard that the shopping was done since this particular shopping had a thrill of its own! But he cheered up at once when he saw his new

T-shirt. He flung his school bag on the bed and hurriedly changed into it.

"Thanks, Ammi!" he said, giving her a tight hug.

"I have also got something for you!" said Rashid, suddenly remembering the bouquet. He carefully took it out from his bag and gave it to her.

"How beautiful!" said his mother, deeply inhaling the fragrance of the roses. 'Put these in water!"

Rashid sprung to his feet, took an empty bottle, filled it with water and put the roses into it and placed the bottle on his study table. "Look how beautiful my table looks, Ammi!" said Rashid proudly. "I wish we could have roses all the time!"

"You can, my dear! Roses are planted with their stems. Why don't you plant them somewhere tomorrow?" said Ammi.

Rashid's eyes were gleaming with enthusiasm. He woke up next morning to the heavenly aroma of vermicelli porridge steaming on the stove. Right in front of him were the bright red roses smiling back at him.

"Id mubarak, Ammi!" he said, flinging his arms around his mother's neck.

"Id mubarak, son!" grinned his mother, affectionately kissing his forehead. "Go, get ready quickly, Shahid will be here any moment now!"

Rashid always enjoyed his Id feast with Shahid. However, Rashid had another task lined up that day. He picked up the roses and ran to the backyard which was an empty piece of land that was hardly used for any purpose. He remembered the headmaster's instructions to plant roses.

Rashid planted the roses in a neat row. Proud of his work, he showed it to his Ammi who was also pleasantly surprised at the job done so well.

As the two were admiring the little garden, they heard Shahid calling out, "Id Mubarak, Rashid! Id Mubarak, Mausi! Where are you?"

"Id Mubarak, Shahid!" said Rashid's mother, calling him into the backyard. "Come and see your friend's garden!"

"Just you wait and see, mine will be the best roses in the world!" announced Rashid proudly.

After enjoying the feast to their heart's content, they rushed off to their neighbourhood for collecting Idi, a small token of love given by elders to youngsters on the occasion. Usually it was in the form of cash that Rashid kept in a tin box inside a small trunk. The box was always kept locked.

"Save your money, dear, instead of blowing it on silly things," his mother always advised him.

Rashid was taking good care of his roses. He watered them twice a day and keenly observed how they were growing. His headmaster, who owned a couple of cows, gave him a liberal amount of cow dung as manure. Soon new leaves began to sprout and Rashid was delighted. Every morning, his garden was the first thing he wanted to see.

It was a month after Id and winter was beginning to set in. The days were getting shorter now.

One evening, while Rashid and his mother had just begun their dinner, Shahid's mother came rushing into their home. She looked pale and was shivering.

"Did you hear the news, Samina? Our factory is gone! There was a short circuit about an hour ago that caused a fire and burnt everything down! The people from the NGO are here and they said new handlooms would be purchased but the process

would take about a year. Oh, we are doomed, Samina! What are we to do for a whole year?"

Rashid's mother was too shocked to react. "How could this happen?" was all she could say.

The following days were difficult. Rashid's mother and dozens of others were suddenly unemployed and finding alternative work was getting increasingly difficult. After a long and desperate search, she had to settle for a job at a construction site as a daily wage labourer. The income was barely enough to make both ends meet though the working hours were longer. She would leave early in the morning and it would be dark by the time she returned. The work had made her irritable and snappy. Many a times Rashid would hear her cry herself to sleep. Rashid wanted to help her but he didn't know how.

Soon spring came. Rashid's plants were healthy and growing well. However, there was still no sign of any buds, let alone flowers! One evening his mother came home rather late and was looking very tired. When they were ready to sleep, she said slowly, "Looks like there will be no Id feast this time, Rashid...I spoke to the contractor...he says he wont give us a raise, nor any bonus."

Rashid was very sad. Not because there would be no Id celebration but it pained him to see his mother's spirits so low. She had always been so encouraging and positive and to be a defeatist was just not her.

"Please, Allah!" Rashid silently prayed, "please

show me a way! Please!"

The morning sun's rays fell upon his eyes and he awoke. As usual he walked to the garden and what he saw made him jump. There was a bud on a stem! Looking closely he discovered there were three more! He yelled with joy and ran inside to tell his mother. But he soon realized she had already left for work. 'Let this be a surprise for Ammi!' he thought.

On the way to school he told Shahid about the buds. So happy was he that he completely forgot his mother's sorrow until lunchtime, when Shahid mentioned his mother's increased irritability.

Shahid's home, however, was not as badly affected as Rashid's since Shahid's father was earning. Rashid voiced his concern for his mother. Shahid consoled him by saying that this year they would have a feast at Shahid's place.

As they crossed the market on their way back from school, Rashid noticed the florist whom he had been seeing since the time he had begun going to school. There was no particular reason to notice him that day either but Rashid kept staring at him for a few moments and then walked on.

Rashid was now groping with ideas to cheer his mother. His mind was so preoccupied that she could not help notice his silence during dinner.

"Something worrying you, son?" she asked.

"No, I want to do something to make you happy. Please tell me, Ammi, what will make you smile again?"

His mother was moved to tears. "Don't worry, son! This is just a passing phase, a matter of a few more months. I heard that our NGO has been sanctioned funds and will now place an order for some good, sturdy handlooms. The old ones needed replacement anyway. By the end of this year, I shall be back to weaving," said his mother and it sounded more of a consolation for her than for her son. "But that still means no Id this year, son!" she added sadly.

"Don't worry, Ammi, Allah loves us and is on our side," said Rashid.

Suddenly he remembered the buds. "You know, Ammi, my garden has its first buds! Three of them!"

But his mother gave no reply as she was fast asleep already!

'I'll tell her tomorrow morning,' thought Rashid happily and soon dozed off.

Next day as well his mother was out to work before he woke up. On his way to school he again stopped by the florist.

"What do you want, young fellow? The roses are good and fresh. Do you want to buy some?" asked the florist.

Rashid shook his head and walked on.

The growth of the buds was slow. It took a week for the tiny dots to become about a centimeter long. Rashid was getting impatient but he knew that he would have to wait. In a couple of days the red petals were beginning to emerge from the clasp of the sepals. 'Bloom time!' thought Rashid happily.

Next day, two bright red roses awaited him in the garden and the third was almost ready to bloom. Rashid was ecstatic. That day as he walked to school, he stopped by the florist to look at the collection of his roses.

"Your roses look nothing as compared to the ones I have in my garden! Mine are bigger and prettier!" boasted Rashid.

"Really?" asked the florist. "You know this town has a good demand for roses but I am unable

to meet it due to shortage of supply. Why don't you sell me your roses? I could offer you a good deal!" suggested the florist.

"No way!" said Rashid, dismissing the idea. "My roses are not for sale."

As they moved on, Shahid suddenly said, "Wait, Rashid!" and went back to the florist. He quickly made some enquiries and came back.

"Listen, buddy!" said Shahid with a hint of excitement in his voice. "He sells roses at Rs. 10 per piece. He buys them from an old woman who owns a small nursery at the end of the town. Your roses are bigger and better and he is willing to pay you Rs. 5 per rose. Think about it! Maybe this could be the way you could earn your Id this year!"

Rashid's first reaction was to ask Shahid to shut up. He could not bear the thought of parting with his roses for commercial purpose. But the whole day he could not think of anything else. 'The roses are not as important as my mother's smile,' he thought.

The following morning, he went to the garden with a blade. The roses were as lovely as ever. His eyes brimmed with tears as he began plucking them. He kissed each of them and wrapped them in an old newspaper. He handed over the bunch to the florist on his way to school.

"You were right! Indeed these are the prettiest roses this town has ever seen!" exclaimed the florist as he opened the bundle. "Here you go!" he said as he handed over Rs. 15.

Rashid quietly took the money and walked on. On his way back the florist called out to him and said, "Hey, Rashid! Look! Your roses are sold already! Get more tomorrow."

In the excitement of his first roses, Rashid completely forgot to check for more buds. He ran home and examined the plants. There were three buds about two centimeters long, four that had just appeared. No rose yet that could bloom the next day itself, but he was happy thinking that his garden was now producing flowers.

Rashid's cash box was slowly filling up. 'I must save every penny so that by the time Id is here I shall be able to do the shopping,' he thought.

One day, while counting his money he discovered he had enough to start the purchasing. 'First I shall buy the ghee since it's the costliest item,' he thought.

Rashid spent nearly half the amount he had saved on buying half a kilo of ghee. Now Rashid was beaming. 'We will have Id, after all,' he promised himself, hiding the can of ghee in his trunk. 'This whole thing has to be a surprise for Ammi.'

The roses kept appearing at irregular intervals. Sometimes there would be about a dozen and on other days not even a single one.

After a month he bought the vermicelli, cashews, raisins and wheat flour and in they went into the trunk. Now all that remained was milk. There was a month remaining for Id. 'The milk,' he told himself, 'will come from my headmaster's farm on the day of Id.'

That very day he went to his headmaster's residence after school to place the order. The headmaster willingly supported the boy's enthusiasm. He also enquired about Rashid's garden and how it was coming along.

Rashid told him about how he had sold his roses to make the purchases for Id. The headmaster patted Rashid's back saying that he need not worry about having plucked the flowers,

since plucking would encourage more growth. On hearing that Rashid was so overjoyed, he danced all the way back home.

Rashid's mother noticed her son's elation which he was unable to hide successfully. She assumed it must be due to Id being round the corner. This made her feel even worse. 'Poor child! He perhaps still hopes that his mother has some magic wand that would enable him to have his Id. Allah, help this child to come to terms with the reality of our lives!' she prayed. Little did she know that Allah had already given the magic wand in their backyard!

Just one more day to go for Id. He woke up at the first call of the rooster, quietly tiptoed out of the house and ran to his headmaster's farm to buy milk. However, he refused money saying that this was his Idi for Rashid.

On reaching home, he saw that his mother had not yet woken up. He tiptoed back to his bed, hiding the bottle under his bed.

Soon his mother woke up and was in the kitchen preparing her morning tea.

"Id Mubarak, Ammi!" greeted Rashid, hugging his Ammi from behind.

"Id Mubarak, my angel!" sobbed his mother.

"Ammi, who taught you to cry so much?" he asked. Have you started preparing the feast? Shahid will be here soon!"

"How many times do I have to tell you that there will be no Id?" his mother snapped.

"Of course there will be, Ammi! I have bought everything you require for the feast," said Rashid, hastily opening his trunk to show his mother the ingredients.

"Where did this come from?" she asked wonder-struck.

Rashid promptly told her about his garden and the roses. She ran out with Rashid to take a look. Today there was just a rose and a couple of buds.

Rashid plucked the rose and gave it to his mother. "This is for you, Ammi. I am sorry I wasn't able to earn enough to buy new clothes!" he said gloomily.

His mother hugged him tight and wept. "Come on, Rashid, don't make me cry. With an angel like you who cares for clothes?"

After a few moments Rashid said, "Ammi, I am hungry! Please make the porridge and puris quickly!" Everyone was laughing now. And Rashid's laughter was the loudest!

Jahnvi (15)
Illustration:
Ankur Mitra

NOWADAYS, ONE of the major needs of a teenager is pocket money. Every teenager who has a close circle of friends with whom he or she socializes, needs money—a lot of it.

Recently in an article published in a newspaper it was reported that Delhi kids were richer in comparison to children from other states. Though the survey included a large number of Indian children from posh colonies, I would like to discuss the status of those children who were not counted in that category—how they managed their teen life.

Take me, for example. I am a teenager and I don't get pocket money. I still manage to socialize, buy gifts for friends and family, and party with my gang. How do I go about it? Here are a few tips for those who need money and for those who want to increase their 'piggy-bank' balance.

1. Our first source of capital income comes from gift money — money that we get for our birthdays and on other occasions. Do something creative with that money. Find out where your capability lies and bring out that talent before people. Believe me, you will be surprised at your own potential.

2. Source of money number two: invest in a few basic things and have faith and patience in your creative talents. Pick up a hobby which suits your nature and your work schedule. For example you could pursue the hobby of making hand-made cards, candle-making etc. and sell your items at a reasonable price in your neighbourhood.

3. Source three: if you are a bit older say in Class XI, XII or even in college, you could teach kids younger than you. This is a big business nowadays. You need not teach higher classes just the junior school kids, either the school subjects or take creative classes like painting, dancing or music whatever you are good at. All said and done, finally everything depends on your capability and ability.

4. Source four: join your welfare association society, check out what they are doing and assure them you could help them implement some of their ideas. Coax them to give you some work and bargain a good deal with them. If you are good at cooking you could even take on the job of supplying the society with snacks during their meetings for which they could pay you.

5. Well, last but not the least is the option of earning money by creative writing. If you have ideas and can communicate them through your writings, this could be a lucrative option. You could contribute anything, a poem, an article, a story, to any recognized newspaper or magazine and get paid after it is published. In my view this is the best method. At least you will get some recognition and by chance if you are not that lucky at least you will be confident of your writing talent. So go ahead and do something—not just for earning your pocket money but more to boost your confidence!

Cool Banana Facts

Jubel D'Cruz
Illustrations: Ankur Mitra

NEXT TO the apple, the banana is India's number one fruit. It is nourishing and can be eaten any time of the day. It is rich in proteins and in important minerals like calcium, potassium, selenium, iron, and so on.

The word 'banana' is derived from an Arabic word, meaning 'finger'. The banana plant is not a tree but a giant herb of the same family as the lilies, orchids and palms.

Bananas have been mentioned for the first time in history in the Buddhist texts.

Alexander the Great discovered the banana in the Indian valleys in 327 B.C. The existence of an organized banana plantation could be found in China way back in 200 A.D.

In 650 A.D., the Arabs introduced the banana into Palestinia. Arabic merchants finally spread the banana all over Africa. But it was only in 1502 A.D. that the Portuguese started the first banana plantation in the Caribbean and in Central America.

Today there are about 400 varieties of bananas available all over the world.

The rhizome is planted and gives a first shoot three or four weeks later. After about nine or ten months, one can see a bud hanging on the plant. Within a week, the bud starts turning red and begins to bloom. Then the leaf that covers it falls down and finally you can see the first banana on the plant.

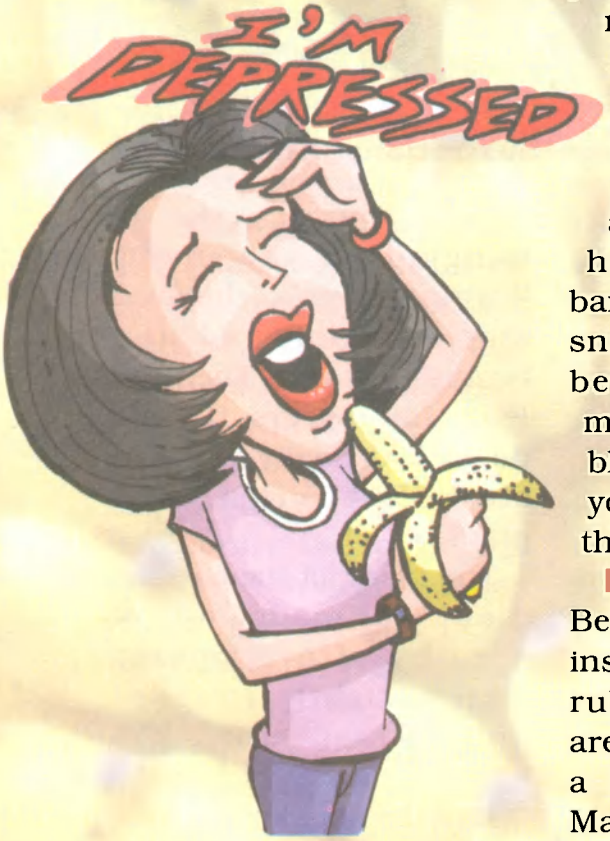
The trunk of the banana plant is made up of sheaths of overlapping leaves, tightly wrapped around each other, like stalks in a celery bunch.

Bananas are rich in fibre and give an instant, sustained and substantial boost of energy. Research has proved that just two bananas a day provide enough energy for a strenuous 90-minute workout for athletes. Little wonder then as to why the banana is the most favoured fruit of the world's leading athletes.

But energy isn't the only reason why we should eat a banana. A banana also helps us keep fit. It helps overcome or prevents the

conditions mentioned below making it a 'must have' of our daily diet.

Depression: According to a recent survey, people



suffering from depression feel better after eating a banana. This is because bananas contain tryptophan, a type of protein that the body converts into serotonin, known to relax the body and generally make you feel happy.

Anaemia: High in iron, bananas can stimulate the production of haemoglobin in the blood and hence helps in cases of anaemia.

Blood Pressure: This unique tropical fruit is extremely high in potassium, low in salt, making it a perfect food to beat blood pressure.

Constipation: High in fibre, including bananas in your diet can help restore normal bowel movement.

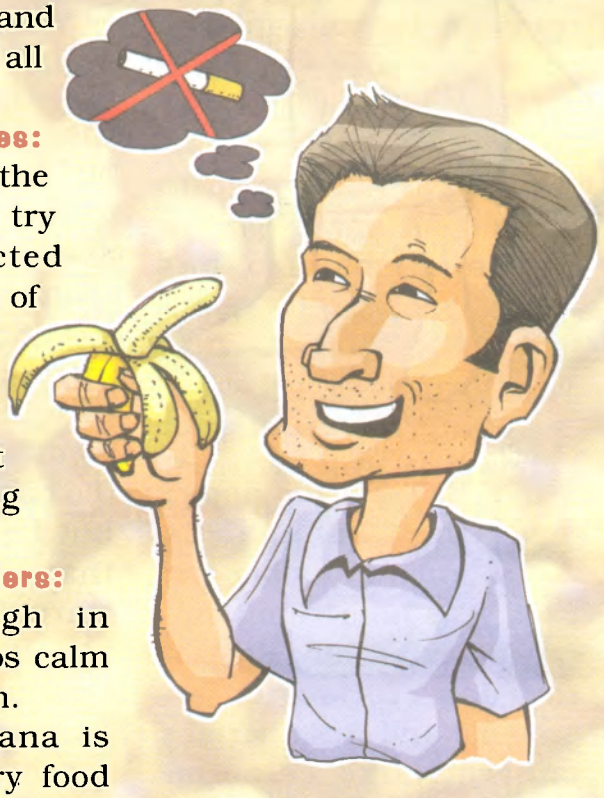
Heartburn: Bananas have a natural antacid effect on your body. If you are suffering from heartburn, try eating a banana for fast relief. Also, snacking on bananas in between meals helps maintain optimum blood sugar levels and you feel energetic all the time.

Mosquito Bites: Before reaching for the insect bite cream, try rubbing the affected area with the inside of a banana skin. Many people find it amazingly successful at reducing swelling and irritation.

Nervous Disorders: Bananas are high in vitamin B that helps calm the nervous system.

Ulcers: The banana is used as the dietary food against intestinal disorders because of its soft texture and smoothness. It also neutralizes over-acidity and reduces irritation by coating the lining of the stomach.

Nicotine Withdrawal: We are all aware of the dangers of smoking, yet we do come across people who find it difficult to kick the habit. Here the banana helps people trying to give up smoking. The B6 and B12 component in bananas as well as its potassium and magnesium content, help the body recover from the effects of nicotine withdrawal.



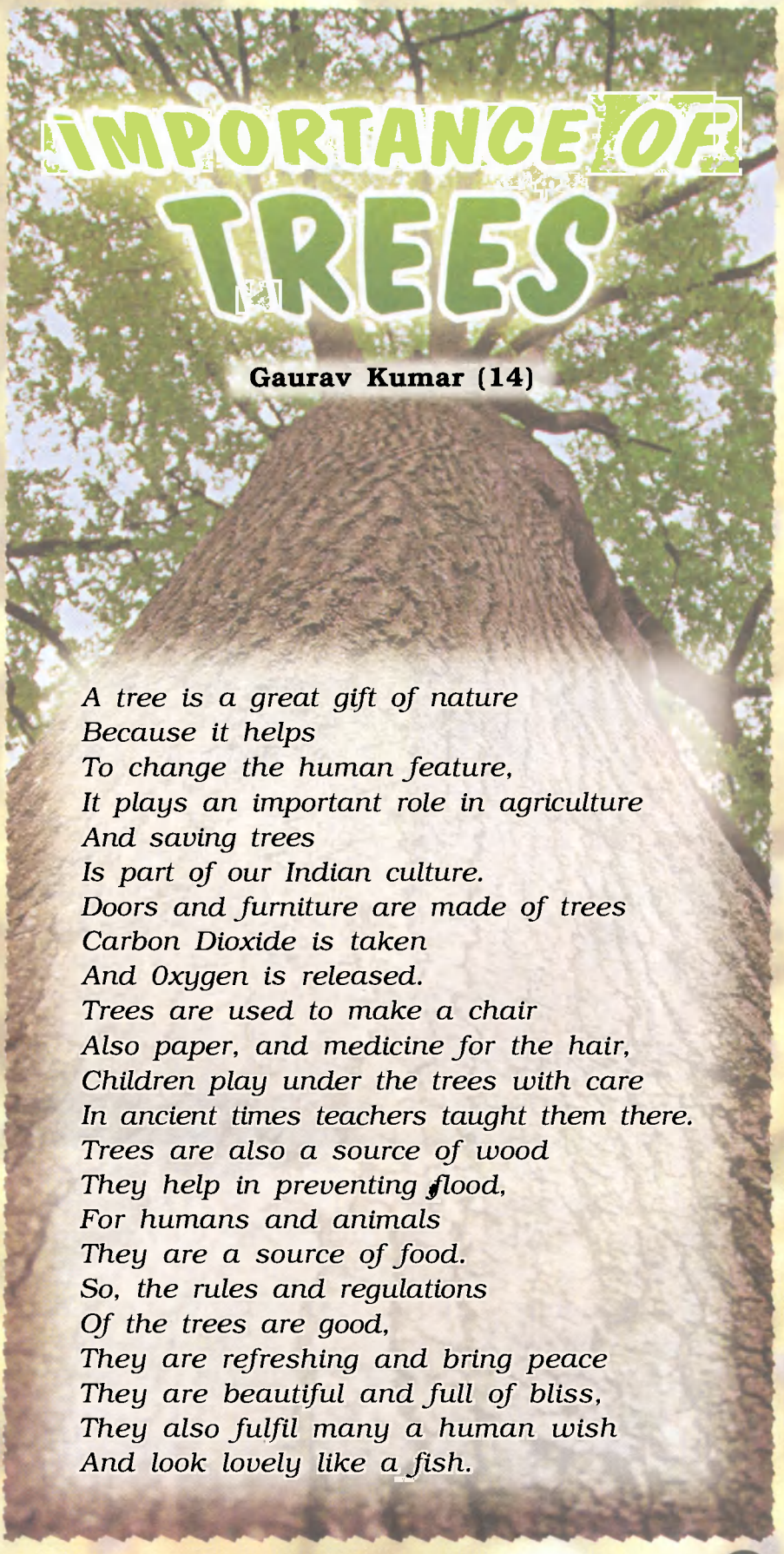
Stress: Potassium is a vital mineral which helps stabilize the heartbeat, sends oxygen to the brain and regulates your body's water balance. When we are stressed, our metabolic

rate rises, thereby reducing our potassium levels. These can be rebalanced with the help of a high-potassium banana snack.

Stroke: According to a research in 'The New England Journal of Medicine', eating bananas as part of a regular diet can cut the risk of death by strokes by as much as 40 per cent.

Warts: Those keen on natural alternatives swear that if you want to remove a wart, take a piece of banana skin and place it on the wart, yellow side out. Carefully hold the skin in place with a plaster or surgical tape.

So, a banana really is a natural remedy for many types of sicknesses. When you compare it to an apple, it has four times the protein, twice the carbohydrate, three times the phosphorous, five times vitamin A and iron, and twice the other vitamins and minerals. It is also rich in potassium and is one of the best value foods available round the year. Hence, just as we do for the apple, it would probably be right to apply the well known phrase to the banana as well: "A banana a day, keeps the doctor away!"❖



IMPORTANCE OF TREES

Gaurav Kumar (14)

A tree is a great gift of nature
Because it helps
To change the human feature,
It plays an important role in agriculture
And saving trees
Is part of our Indian culture.
Doors and furniture are made of trees
Carbon Dioxide is taken
And Oxygen is released.
Trees are used to make a chair
Also paper, and medicine for the hair,
Children play under the trees with care
In ancient times teachers taught them there.
Trees are also a source of wood
They help in preventing flood,
For humans and animals
They are a source of food.
So, the rules and regulations
Of the trees are good,
They are refreshing and bring peace
They are beautiful and full of bliss,
They also fulfil many a human wish
And look lovely like a fish.

ANIMAL FACTS

Alaka Shankar
Layout: Subir Roy

THERE ARE some 45 species of **Kangaroos** found in Australia—the only continent where you will find nearly 50 million Kangaroos.

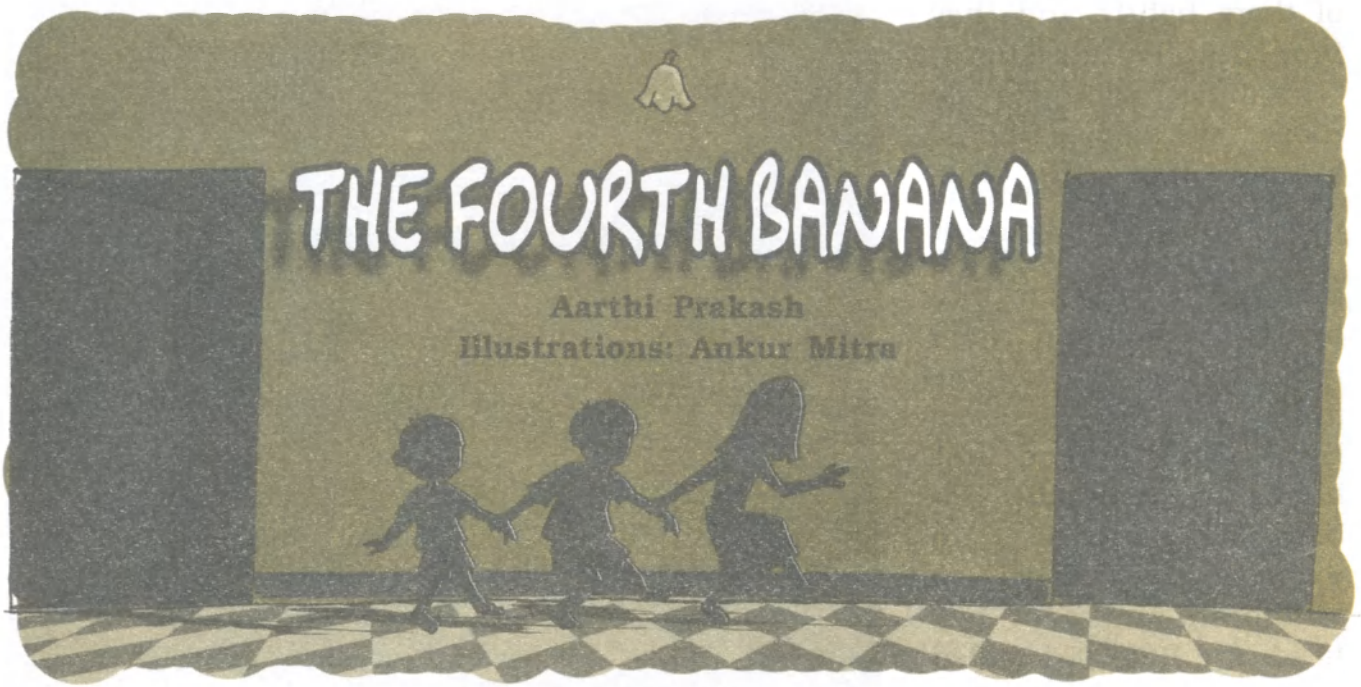
A Kangaroo eats grass and leaves and has a life expectancy of about 18 years. While a Wallaby is like a small kangaroo, just about 12 inches in height, a male kangaroo can grow upto 7 feet tall! Male kangaroos are called Boomers or Bucks, females are known as Flyers, Jills or Does, and baby kangaroos are called Joeys.

Found only in Australia, **Koalas** belong to a class of animals that are among the oldest inhabitants of the planet. They have one of the most specialized diets of any living mammal, feeding exclusively on the leaves of a certain species of eucalyptus. Koalas sleep as much as 18 hours a day and have a lifespan of upto 18 years.

Leopards are found in Africa and Asia. Their powerful limb and neck muscles enable them to carry a full grown male Antelope or a young Giraffe, often weighing up to three times their own body weight, right up to the tops of trees.

The **Lions** stands out from the other big cats not just in their distinctive appearance but also in being the only felines to live in organized social groups. Adult males weigh upto 225kg and grow up to 3m in body length. Their prey consists of medium to large herd of animals. Once the prey is taken it is common for males to eat first even though they play no part in the hunting process.

Llamas are domesticated animals. They are members of the Camel family but differ from them in that they have only three stomachs instead of four. Llamas weigh between 100 and 200kg with a height of 1.8m from the head. They have a lifespan of 30 to 50 years.❖



THE FOURTH BANANA

Aarthi Prakash
Illustrations: Ankur Mitra

RAGHAV, PREETHAM and Navneetha waited until it was safe enough for them to venture out of their room. Hand in hand, they quickly walked past their parents' room. Then they peered from around a wall to check if they had been heard.

"It is safe. I think we can go now," said Navneetha, the eldest and an over-confident kid.

Preetham whose motto in life was 'live to eat' nodded his head in anticipation. "Yes, yes, Didi, let's go," he said.

Raghav, youngest among the three but hailed as the smartest, hesitated saying, "Are you sure, Didi? I mean what if Ma and Papa found out?"

"Don't be stupid!" said Preetham angrily, "are you coming with us or..?"

Raghav closed his eyes in fear. The image of Preetham's strong hands hitting him was not a pleasant thought.

"He will come with us, Preethu, otherwise..." Navneetha let her words trail, hinting at what could happen if their little brother dared to disobey!

Reluctantly Raghu followed his siblings to the refrigerator.

"I will open the door of the fridge, Didi! I will!"

"Shut up, fatso!" hissed the eldest, "I will open the fridge!"

Sensing that Preetham appeared to be in a mood to rebel, Navneetha pretended to be kind, "Since I am taller than all of you, only I can reach the handle. You two can check out what is inside and decide what we will take."

Preethu immediately brightened but Raghu was still miserable. "This is not right," he said in a small voice but no one paid any attention to him.

Navneetha clasped the handle tight and pulled it hard. But the door of the refrigerator did not budge.

Navneetha smiled sheepishly and said, "My hands are sweaty. Let me wipe them first. Raghu, please show the flashlight here. That's right." And she tugged at the handle again. The door remained firm. Preethu broke into a giggle. Raghu joined him. Navneetha smacked both

of them lightly and they immediately fell silent. "This time I will open the fridge," she said, sounding almost like she was promising them.

Now taking a deep breath...blowing air into her cupped palms...then rubbing them together she muttered 'Jai Bajrang Bali!' and placed her hands on the handle. Her brothers looked on expectantly. With a snobbish shake of her head, the little girl pulled at the handle as hard as she could.

Voila! To Navneetha's surprise and delight the door of the fridge opened wide revealing all that a child always dreamed of—leftover vegetable pizza, samosas, alu kachoris, apple pies, chocolate pastries, different flavoured ice-cream cups, gajar ka halwa and a big bowl of fruits! Mmm...

In the sheer joy of discovering a treasure trove, Preethu forgot his greediness and Raghav failed to recall his sense of right and wrong. Even Navneetha forgot her snobbishness and the three hugged each other. This camaraderie, however, lasted for only some moments. Hstory is proof enough that stolen

treasure breeds greed!

"You are cheating, Di..."

"Yes, you must divide the pastry equally amongst the three of us."

Navneetha had not expected this. Didn't expect her brothers to side with each other and question her authority. She put her hands on her hips. She glared at them and threatened them with many unpleasant things.

"If you do that, we will tell Ma and Papa." Raghav said quietly and folded his hands in defiance.

Preethu nodded his head in agreement.

That was that. Navneetha sighed and looked up as if to say 'life is like that! No gratefulness. Anyway!'

Her podgy fingers were about to tear the pastry into three unequal parts when her eyes noticed something, 'Look at that bunch of bananas, both of you. No, no, I am not cheating. Just look at it."

The other two looked at the bunch of lovely, ripe yellow bananas.

Preethu didn't notice anything. "Didi," he said impatiently, "give me the pastry please."

But Raghu's sharp eyes had noticed what his Didi was pointing to. 'Look, Di! The fourth banana is missing from the bunch."

They searched the entire fridge and the kitchen too. But the fourth banana was missing.

They walked back to their room, their little heads thinking furiously.

"I think it's just a mistake. Maybe Ma didn't notice the missing banana when she bought the fruits," Navneetha said in her usual, confident tone.

"Are you sure someone else hasn't been stealing... I mean...like us?" Preethu asked, his face a picture of worry.

Raghu, the bright one, snapped his tiny fingers, "I know Mamma buys six bananas every day. Let us come here tomorrow night again to see if the banana is missing. If it is, we will know for sure there's a thief around."

It was an uneasy night the three spent in their room. Each pretended to be brave but the fact that there was a banana thief at large was unnerving. To top it all, their night adventure had flopped! They had not tasted even a morsel from the fridge as was evident by Preethu's rumbling stomach.

***

"Get up, you sleepy heads. Who wants hot-hot *gobi parantha, makkhan* and *lassi?*"

"I want it!"

"I also want it!"

"Me too! Me too!"

The previous night's adventure was forgotten in a jiffy. Everybody was vying with each other to devour Ma's tasty breakfast spread. In no time Ma was clearing up the empty dishes with a smile. 'Summer holidays make the children so hungry!' she thought.

The rest of the day was spent in playing what started out as games but ended in ugly fights, pacified only by pig-sized portions of lunch, tea, snacks, summer drinks and Ma's threats.

Then, of course, came night, bringing along with it the fear-cum-thrill of the previous night.

Raaghav and Preetham stuck close to their sister and held her night gown tightly. Though her heart was beating as loudly, Navneetha put her arms around her brothers protectively and led them to the fridge.

This time the two little ones were not at all anxious to fight for the right to open the fridge. Praying silently and taking courage in both hands, Navneetha slowly opened the fridge. The grip of the brothers clinging to their sister's gown tightened.

"Here!" and Navneetha, dramatically throwing open the fridge.

Preethu gave a scream and dropped the flashlight on the floor.

The three ran back to their room without even a backward glance. "The fourth ba-ba-nana," gasped Raghu, "it's missing!"

"So there is a thief," finished Navneetha. "This means we will have to keep a watch tomorrow night, too, or until we catch the thief."

Preethu screamed, "No, no!" his pot belly shaking in fear. "I have heard thieves cut your throats."

"Like this," said Raghu and mimed the action.

"Shut up, you two. Real thieves steal gold chains and cars, not just a single banana. If we catch this thief, Papa and Mama might even reward us."

Three pairs of eyes glowed at the idea.

"I will ask for a doll's house," said Raghav.

"Cool. And I, permission to eat ice-cream at every meal for a month!" said Preetham. "Di, what will you ask for?"

Navneetha thought for a moment, "I would love a children's encyclopaedia set, but if it's too costly then I'll take whatever they give me. Maybe I can share Raghu's doll set and Preethu's ice-cream for a month."

The boys looked at each other doubtfully. They were not too sure they believed in sharing anything with their Di, for Di's concept of sharing was not exactly reliable.

"Anyway," continued Navneetha, "tonight, let's get out of our room as soon as everyone goes to bed."

"Then we will hide behind the sofa and watch the fridge."

"Great idea, Preethu."

Preetham beamed at the thump from his Di. Raghu wanted that thump, too. So he said eagerly, "I will take Papa's phone camera so we will have proof, too, like in the detective cartoons!"

Navneetha gave a light peck on his cheek saying, "Great idea, Chotu!"

But unluckily for the children and luckily for the thief, they were never able to put their plan into action for many days. For, something or the other always happened to distract them away from their mission.

At last there was just one day for the school to re-open. It was a question of now or never.

Preethu brought up the subject, "You know...we still don't know who stole the fourth banana."

Navneetha dropped the toy syringe she was handling as she pretended to give 'patient' Raghu a jab on the arm. "Oops! That's right. School will start from tomorrow. Let's keep a watch tonight!"

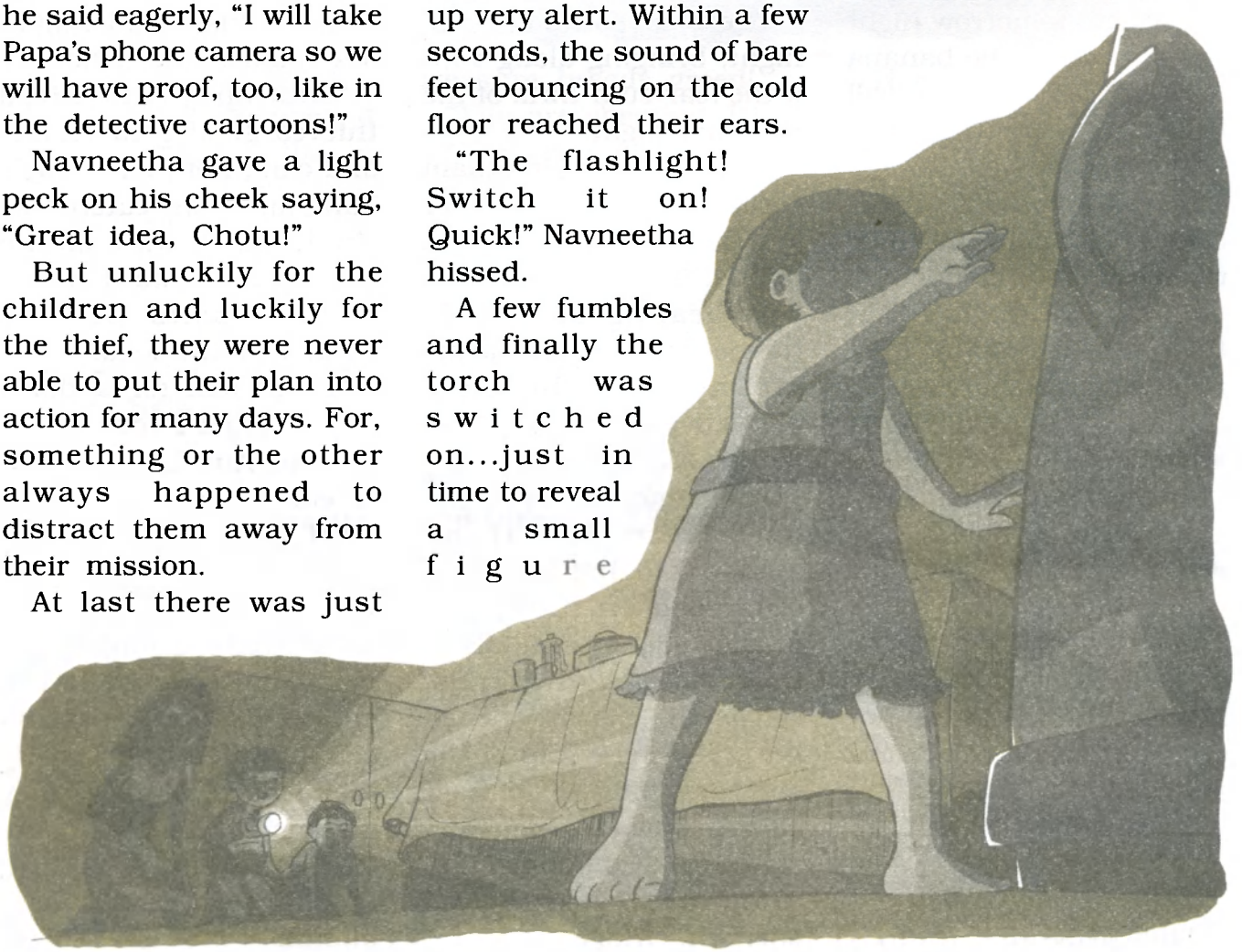
The three young snoring detectives were woken up by a faint sound. They sat up very alert. Within a few seconds, the sound of bare feet bouncing on the cold floor reached their ears.

"The flashlight! Switch it on! Quick!" Navneetha hissed.

A few fumbles and finally the torch was switched on...just in time to reveal a small figure opening the fridge.

The figure paused and looked at the various things inside the fridge sleepily. Her face lit up when the bananas came into view. Eagerly it counted "One...Tooo... Thee...Por!" then clapping merrily, plucked the fourth banana, gobbled it up and went back to sleep.

The figures crouched behind the dining table were stumped. The thief was none other than their baby sister who had just learnt to count!❖



THE SOLAR SYSTEM

Shivang Singh (10)
Illustration:
Saurabh Pandey

"HEY, HOW are you this morning, Earth?" asked Mars.

"Not fine," said Earth.

"Why?" asked Venus.

"Because there are fights taking place all over me," said Earth.

"Yeah, I know it must neighbouring countries fighting again," said Mars.

"Absolutely right," said Earth. "India's neighbour is fighting for her share of the neighbour's land and similarly there are others fighting for their rights within the land. I don't know when they will stop fighting. Innocent people are dying and I am getting destroyed by the day. Sometimes I have craters in me, sometimes there is fire from bomb blasts. Oh! I go through so much pain. You planets—Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto and Xenus are so lucky, atleast there is no life on you. I used to feel proud to have life on me but now this terrorism! It is just too much! I am half dead because of pollution that comes from bomb blasts, vehicular traffic and so on. Really, Earth is no longer worth living on."

Hearing the plight of his friend Mars felt sad. "We should send asteroids to inform the planets about our friend's condition so that they can find a way to help her," said Mars.

"Go and get each planet's idea and report to us, Asteroids One and Two," commanded Venus.

"Yes, sir," they said.

Eighty days later...

"Sir! Mercury, Jupiter and Saturn have no idea about what we should do," said Asteroid One.

"Oh God! Now where is Asteroid Two?" asked Mars.

"He will come in twenty days after noting down the ideas of Neptune, Uranus, Pluto and Xenus," said Asteroid One.

Twenty days later...

"Sorry everyone, none of the Planets have an idea," informed Asteroid Two.

"Forget it, I don't think I can survive for long," said Earth, "I wonder when people will understand they are harming me and giving me so much pain."

Moral: Stop polluting and destroying Earth. Also, stop fighting with each other and try to make this world a better place to live in. Even God wanted it that way. That is why he made our world so beautiful.❖

Celebrating 150 years of Tagore

The year 2010 will see Santiniketan, the abode of Rabindranath Tagore, as the country's next World Heritage Site to be declared by UNESCO.

A five-coach 'exhibition train' called Sanskriti Express, displaying the various aspects of Tagore's life was inaugurated by the Railway Minister Mamata Banerjee which will travel across the country.

Born on May 7, 1861, Rabindranath was the 14th child in a family of 15. Since childhood Rabi, as Rabindranath was affectionately called, was attracted to nature. Both poetry and song came to him naturally. At 15 his first poem 'Banaphool' (Wild Flower) was published in a magazine named *Jnanankur.*

Geeta Menon
Layout: Subir Roy

THE YEAR-LONG celebration of the 150th birth anniversary of India's first Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore began on May 7, 2010. On this occasion Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh inaugurated an exhibition of his paintings called 'The Master's Strokes: Art of Rabindranath Tagore' at the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi.

Sangeet Natak Akademi, Sahitya Akademi, Lalit Kala Akademi and the Union Culture Ministry hosted a three-day event called Rabindra Pranati in New Delhi. The event acknowledged Tagore's genius in the entire array of arts that are represented by the three national akademies.

Besides the above, a series of events like poets meets, puppet plays on Tagore's stories, panel discussions on his art, renderings from his literary works by leading actors, renderings of *Gitanjali* in different languages by renowned poets and Rabindra Sangeet by eminent artistes were organized all over the country.

Even decades after his death, the collection of all his writings and letters is not complete. A four-volume *Rabindra Chitraavali* (collection of paintings) will be brought out by the Vishva Bharati University.

Rabindranath overcame financial difficulties, bereavements, and mastered writing stories, poems, essays, novels and dramas. His patriotic song 'Jana gana mana', was adopted as our National Anthem. Another of his patriotic songs, 'Amar sonar Bangla' is the National Anthem of Bangladesh.

A visionary, who believed that education was the only means by which our country could progress, Rabindranath founded Santiniketan in 1901 which was a school modelled on the ancient ideals of the *gurukula* tradition.

In 1913 Rabindranath was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for *Gitanjali* which was an English translation of his Bengali poems.

Rabindranath established the Vishva Bharati in 1921. It was an international university, where scholars from all over the world came together and exchanged ideas.

Rabindranath took to painting quite late in life, when he was 60. In 1930, his paintings were exhibited in France, England, Germany, Russia and America.

He had a special bond with the Father of the Nation, Gandhiji. And it was Rabindranath who gave him the title 'Mahatma'.

On August 7, 1941, Rabindranath Tagore passed away at the age of 80.❖

The Month That Was

Geeta Menon

NATIONAL

May 1: Denying media reports that a huge quantity of radioactive material was dumped on the Delhi University Campus, Vice-Chancellor Deepak Pental said that a team of experts did not detect any abnormal radiation levels at the site.

May 2: Jharkhand Chief Minister Shibu Soren to continue in his post as of now, with the BJP putting on hold its decision not to support the state government.

May 3: After a 271-day trial, a special sessions court pronounces Mohammad Ajmal Amir Kasab, the lone surviving gunman of the November 26, 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, guilty of waging war against India.

May 4: Mumbai's 70 lakh commuters heave a sigh of relief, as metromen call off their hunger strike after Maharashtra Home Minister R.R. Patil assures them that their demands would be placed before the railway authorities.

May 5: In a major blow to investigating agencies, the Supreme Court holds unconstitutional and a violation of the right to privacy, the use of narco analysis, brain-mapping and polygraph tests on accused, suspects and witnesses without their consent.

Parliament approves the increase in the gratuity limit for employees from Rs. 3.5 lakh to Rs. 10 lakh with the Rajya Sabha approving the legislation by voice note.

May 6: Mohammad Ajmal Amir Kasab sentenced to death on five counts: murder, abetment to murder, waging war, criminal conspiracy and committing terrorist acts.

The Department of Posts, one of India's oldest establishments, becomes the first government organization to be on the social networking site Twitter. It is titled 'postofficeindia'.

May 7: The Supreme Court says that Governors cannot be removed at Centre's whims, nor can they be removed on the ground that the Union Government has lost confidence in him/her.

May 10: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh pulls up Minister of State for Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh, asking him to refrain from commenting on the functioning of other ministries in public.

May 12: Justice Sarosh Homi Kapadia, the seniormost judge of the Supreme Court, sworn in as the 38th Chief Justice of India.

May 13: With Jairam Ramesh having expressed contrition for his remarks last week against the Home Ministry to the Prime Minister, the Congress President and, in person, to the Home Minister himself, both the government and the party have signalled an end to the controversy.

May 15: President Pratibha Patil signs an ordinance empowering the government to dissolute the Medical Council of India, a regulatory body responsible for maintaining standards of medical education.

Former Vice-President and three-time Chief Minister of Rajasthan in the past, Bhairon Singh Shekhawat (87) passes away in Jaipur following a heart attack.

May 17: At least 35 people including 24 civilians and 11 Special Police Officers killed when Maoists blow up a private bus in Dantewada in Chhattisgarh.

May 20: Suspected Maoists blow up railway tracks in Bihar's Motihari district leading to the derailment of a goods train.

May 21: Commander Dilip Donde becomes the first Indian to circumnavigate the world solo, covering about 21,600 nautical miles (38,880 km.) under sail.

May 22: An Air India Express plane from Dubai overshoots the table-top runway at the Bajpe International Airport in Mangalore and plunges over a cliff into a wooden valley killing 158 persons. Eight persons survived miraculously. Union Civil Aviation Minister Praful Patel accepts moral responsibility for the air crash.

May 23: Bringing down the curtain on one of the most acrimonious battles of post Independence corporate India, the Ambani brothers—Mukesh and Anil decide to end the sharp differences and create an environment of harmony, cooperation and collaboration between their groups.

May 24: In a major break-through, the Chhattisgarh police arrest six persons who were allegedly involved in the gunning down of 76 security personnel in Dantewada last month.

May 25: A sessions court rejects S.P.S. Rathore's appeal against his conviction in the case of molestation of Ruchika, a 14-year-old tennis player who subsequently committed suicide, and enhances the sentence for the former Haryana DGP from six months rigorous imprisonment to 18 months.

The Supreme Court stays the execution of the death penalty awarded to Aftab Ansari in the January 22, 2002 terrorist attack case on the American Center in Kolkata.

Flash strike by Air India employees to protest against the delay in salary payment hits Air

India operations.

- **May 26:** The two-day strike by a section of Air India employees to protest against the delay in salary payment called off. Seventeen employees are sacked.
- President Pratibha Patil who is on a week-long official visit to China speaks about 'a shared vision for the 21st Century'.
- **May 27:** Enraged at the Canadian High Commission repeatedly denying visa to serving and retired Indian security and intelligence officers, the Union Home Ministry expresses the hope that Ottawa will take corrective measures soon.
- **May 28:** A goods train rams into 13 derailed coaches of the Howrah-Kurla Jnaneswari Express killing 141 persons and injuring at least 150 in Sardiha, West Bengal.
- **May 29:** President Pratibha Patil dedicates an Indian-style temple in the town of Luoyang to the 'friendship between the people of India and the people of China'.
- **May 30:** Three-time Jharkhand Chief Minister Shibu Soren resigns after failing to get the support of the Congress and its ally JVM (P) ahead of trust vote in the Assembly.
- Thirty persons were charred to death as the bus in which they were travelling caught fire in Chitradurga district in Karnataka.

INTERNATIONAL

- **May 7:** British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's Labour Party ends with 258 seats in Parliament, 68 short of a majority and says that he is prepared to discuss with Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg.
- **May 11:** After a day of frenetic developments, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown resigns to clear the way for a Conservative Liberal Democrat Government.
- **May 12:** Britain's first post-war coalition government, with Conservative leader David Cameron as Prime Minister and his Liberal Democrat counterpart Nick Clegg as Deputy Prime Minister, takes office promising to give the country a 'historic new direction'.
- A Libyan Airbus jet crashes while landing in Tripoli airport killing 103 people on board most of them Dutch, leaving a young 8-year-old Dutch boy the lone survivor.
- **May 14:** Seven people die and more than 100 injured in clashes between Thai troops and the 'Red Shirt' anti-government protesters in Bangkok.
- **May 18:** In a move that aims to strengthen the US monitoring and, where possible, enforcement of press freedom the world over, President Barack Obama signs the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act into Law.
- **May 19:** Thailand's military and civilian leaders assume 'full control of the situation' after crushing a two-month protest and imposing an overnight curfew in the capital, Bangkok and over 20 provinces.
- **May 20:** India-born Scot John Shepherd-Barron (84), inventor of the ATM, dies after a short illness in London.
- **May 28:** Eighty people killed and 70 injured in a coordinated attack by terrorists on two mosques in Lahore.
- **May 31:** Israeli commandos attack a high profile Gaza-bound Turkish aid flotilla killing 19 people and triggering in its wake a wave of outrage across the globe.

Anand: the Undisputed King of Chess

- **May 11:** Viswanathan Anand retained the FIDE World Chess Championship defeating Bulgarian Veselin Topalov in Sofia, Bulgaria. Playing one of the toughest matches of his life, Anand (40) lost the first game badly, but he kept his cool and achieved an improbable win in 56 moves in the 12th and the final game to retain the title by 6.5-5.5 margin.

Anand became the Undisputed World Chess Champion after winning an eight-player tournament in 2007 and defended his title against Russian Vladimir Kramnik in 2008. Thus he became the first official world champion in recent history to win two back-to-back matches in world championships against different opponents.

The World title will remain in Indian hands for another two years. Viswanathan Anand hopes to defend the title in 2012 as well.

SPORTS

- **May 6:** Deandra Dottin of West Indies becomes the first woman to score the fastest T20 century when she scored an unbeaten 112 of 45 balls against South Africa during ICC World Twenty20 at Warner Park in St. Kitts.
- **May 8:** Pakistan men defeat Malaysia and Hong Kong China women defeat India in the final of the men's and women's team events at the Asian Squash Championships in Chennai.
- **May 9:** Suresh Raina named Captain of the Indian cricket team for the Zimbabwe tri-series beginning May 28 as the top Indian cricketers of the team are rested.
- **May 10:** Defending champions India put on a fighting display to beat world champions Australia 4-3 at the Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Cup in Ipoh scoring their first win over the Aussies in seven years.
- **May 13:** An in-form Sushil Kumar notched up his first ever gold medal in the Asian Wrestling Championship in New Delhi.
- **May 16:** England lifts the ICC World Twenty20 defeating Australia by 7 wickets in the finals in Barbados.
- India and Korea declared joint champions in the Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Tournament. The final was abandoned due to heavy rains.
- Ravinder Singh adds another Greco Roman bronze medal to India's kitty in the Asian Championships in New Delhi.
- **May 17:** Australian women beat New Zealand in the final of the ICC World Women's Twenty20 championship in Barbados.
- **May 21:** The Delhi High Court quashes the Centre's 2008 order de-recognizing the Indian Hockey Federation.
- **May 22:** Two teenagers, Jordan Romero (13) from USA and Arjun Vajpai (16) from Delhi, make history in climbing Mt. Everest. Arjun becomes the youngest Indian to achieve the feat.

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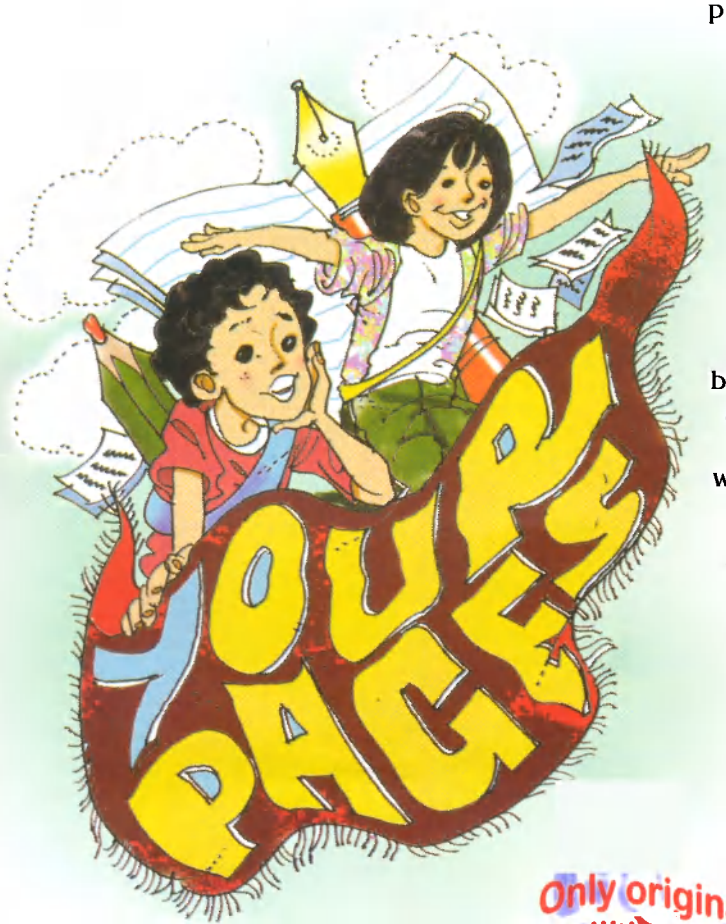
YOUR PAGES COMPETITION 2010



It's summer again! Time to think about the **CW Your Pages Competition!**
A Competition that demands that each one of you puts down his/her best creative thoughts to join the exclusive 'Your Pages' family. You could send stories, features, poems, anecdotes, jokes or puzzles and win the following prizes:

First Prize: Rs. 700.00
Second Prize: Rs. 400.00
Third Prize: Rs. 300.00
Highly Commended (3): Rs. 150.00 each

Important

The Competition is open to children in the age-group 5-16 years only. Each entry must have, in block letters, **your name, age, boy/girl, address, and name of the school. It must also contain the Declaration form given below.** Entries without this Declaration form are invalid. If you are sending more than one entry, a photostat of the Declaration form may be used. Not more than **THREE** entries must be sent by each participant.

Entries must only be sent by post.
The word limit not to exceed 1000 words.
The entry/entries must be accompanied by ONLY ONE passport-size photograph of the participant.

Only original articles will be considered

Send your entries to
Your Pages
Editor, Children's World
Nehru House
4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg
New Delhi 110002

The last date for receipt of entries: July 31, 2010

DECLARATION (FILL IN BLOCK LETTERS)

I.....*, age*.....*, boy/girl*..... *declare that my entry,*..... *is my original, unpublished work. If found otherwise, I agree to return whatever prize or certificate I receive from* Children's World.

.....*(Signature)*
Ms/Mr.....
Address:.....
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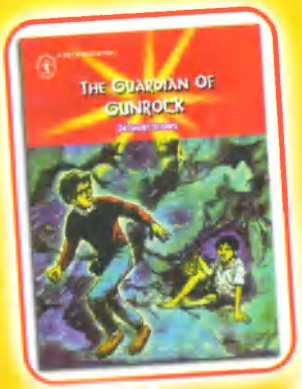

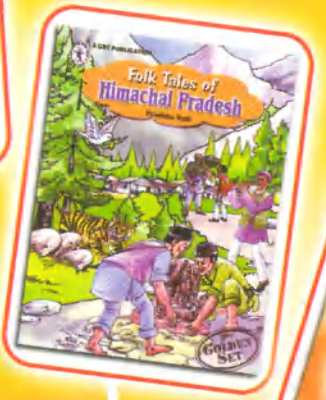

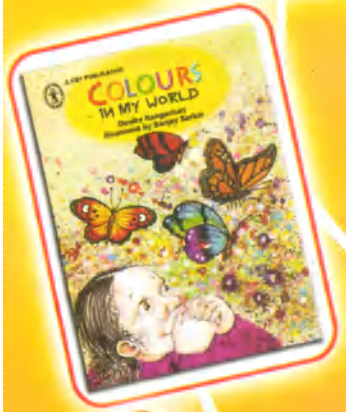

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